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FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

XXVIII.

THE FIELDENS OF TODMORDEN.

On the picturesque borderland of Yorkshire and Lancashire, at the foot of the Blackstone Edge range of hills, lies the thriving town of Todmorden, which, since the latter part of the last century, has been notably identified with, and has grown in proportion with, the fortunes of the Fielden family. It was in the County Palatine that the cotton-manufacture of England was cradled; and Todmorden, which is partly in that county, assisted largely in its development, thanks to the energy, enterprise, and ability of the Fieldens. This family had long been creditably known in the district. They could trace an unbroken descent from a Fielden who lived in the time of James I., one Nicholas Fielden, who held a farm at Inchfield in Walsden, under a deed dated 1612. Nicholas was described as a yeoman, and yeomen the Fieldens continued to be from that period down to the concluding years of the eighteenth century. The family had always lived on the hills round about Todmorden, employing themselves in the farming of land and the manufacturing of woollen cloth. In this way, the Joshua Fielden who may be regarded as the founder of the fortunes of the later generations of

Fieldens employed himself. His farmhouse was situated on the heights above Todmorden, and was known as Edge End, which may be taken as in some measure descriptive of its position. Here Joshua Fielden farmed his bit of land—which would not be of the most fertile kind—and here he kept his two or three hand-loom, at which he and the members of his family worked at such times as they were not needed in the field. It was a quiet uneventful sort of life, its main relief being afforded by the periodical journeys which Joshua had to make to Halifax market, with his cloth on his back. For years he trudged this distance on foot, over a rugged road, thinking little of the twenty-four miles of ground his feet had to cover in those expeditions; for men were hardy in that day, and inured to physical exertion. There would be one or two houses of call by the wayside, where he would halt for a rest and a chat; but the one bright spot to him in these passings to and fro was a farmhouse called Rodwell End, in the township of Stansfield. This farm was kept by James Greenwood, whose daughter Jenny had set the heart of the young farmer-clothier aflame with love. Next to the selling

of his pieces, her smile was the one thing that he looked for on these journeys; and it is only fair to presume, from what subsequently happened, that Jenny had an equal regard for him. At all events, they were married, and for several years they plodded carefully and lovingly on at Edge End, and the farming and the cloth-weaving prospered fairly well.

So matters continued until somewhere about the year 1782, when Joshua Fielden was suddenly fired with a new ambition. A fresh era of industry was dawning. The great cotton-spinning inventions of Hargreaves and Arkwright had begun to make their impress on the trade which they had been designed to help; and the steam-engine was gradually being brought into use as a motive-power. Crompton was just on the eve of perfecting his mule, and the industrial world altogether was in the throes of transformation. It was then that Joshua Fielden, with the pioneer's instinct, resolved to relinquish the dual occupations of farmer and cloth-maker for that of cotton-spinner; and, with that view, he removed himself and his household belongings from Edge End to a quiet little place called Lane Side, down in the Vale of Todmorden. It is said that his wife Jenny was greatly depressed at the thought of having to leave her home amongst the hills, where she had been so happy, and often remarked that it would have given her far greater pleasure to move higher up than to go lower down, where she would miss the healthy moorland breezes and the far-stretching prospect. But sentimentalism has never been an overwhelming influence amongst the race of commercial explorers; and Joshua Fielden was not the

man to turn back from a great business idea for the mere sake of indulging a love of place. So to Lane Side they went, and entered into the occupation of three two-storied cottages, with little gardens in front, bordering the highway. Of one of these cottages they made their living place; of the other two they made working places. Those three cottages, heightened by an additional story, still remain to mark the starting-point of the great industrial career which followed.

At first they confined themselves to the hand-spinning of cotton, and managed to keep in constant employment, which was considered a clever thing to do with Joshua Fielden's large family of five sons and four daughters. But there was wonderful unanimity of purpose amongst them; as the country people had it, 'they all pulled one way.' The sons were Samuel, Joshua, John, James, and Thomas, all of whom were imported into the business as they got old enough to take part in it. As time went on, and their operations extended, it became necessary for them to have larger premises; but, with the cautiousness which has always been a characteristic of the Fieldens, they did not do it by unmanageable strides. To begin with, they simply added a story to the three cottages; then, after a few more years, when they decided to avail themselves of steam-power, they erected a stone mill of five stories, seven windows in length, adjoining the cottages; and by this time they were fairly embarked in the cotton-manufacture, and began to count for something in the commercial world. Each of the sons was allotted to a special department, and the father exercised a general superintendence over the whole. Joshua

(the son) was the mechanic; James had the direction of the spinning and weaving; Thomas went to take charge of a warehouse which they established in Manchester; and John was the master spirit who saw to the buying of the cotton and the selling of the manufactured goods. It is related that when John was only nineteen years of age, he was in the habit of walking with his father to the Manchester market every Tuesday—a distance of forty miles there and back. They left home about four o'clock in the morning; transacted their business in Manchester, personally delivering all the goods they sold; and then they would walk back to Todmorden, arriving there about midnight of the same day. No task was too difficult for them, no hours too long, no sacrifice too great, so long as they were helping forward their business enterprise. John Fielden has left it on record that, from the age of ten, or little more, he had been actively employed in the work of his father's mill.

In 1811, Joshua Fielden, the father, died, and a few years after his death the name of the firm was changed from that of 'Joshua Fielden & Sons' to Fielden Brothers. Samuel Fielden died in 1822, leaving the concern in the hands of Joshua, John, James, and Thomas Fielden, by whom such success was eventually obtained that they became prominent among the cotton lords of the North. Year by year they widened their sphere of operation, adding mill to mill, until that vast pile of buildings known as Waterside grew to its present magnitude. When cotton-spinning had first been started by them in the old cottages, it was by means of the spinning-jenny, and the carding was done by hand; then came the carding

by machinery, and the throstle and the mule; the produce of these being woven into cloth by the hand-loom, until that in its turn was superseded by the power-loom. At the beginning the motive-power was a water-wheel, then one very small steam-engine, then a larger one, and eventually one of fifty horse power, which gave the propelling force to the various operations.

About the year 1829 the firm erected a large weaving-shed, which covered an acre of ground, and had one continuous roof supported solely by pillars. This shed held over eight hundred looms, which were turned by an engine of sixty horse-power. At the time of its erection this was the largest shed in the world, and attracted much attention. But even then, vast as the extensions had been, and closely as they had followed each other, the firm had by no means touched the limit of enlargement. More spinning-mills continued to be built, and a second and larger weaving-shed was ultimately put up, capable of holding one thousand looms. Two more large steam-engines were erected, of sixty horse-power each, working together with one fly-wheel. Meanwhile, Todmorden was growing in extent and importance, a large population finding its way to the place as operatives for Fielden Brothers. The elder Joshua Fielden had found it but a small hamlet; he himself caused it to grow to the dimensions of a respectable village, and his sons and grandsons developed it into a town. No matter how the cotton trade fared generally, or how other places suffered from times of depression, the Fieldens and Todmorden kept their heads up through all.

Up to the year 1844, the various erections comprising the

Waterside works had been confined to the east side of the turnpike road ; but about that time the buildings were extended to the western side, and a vast range of warehouses was ultimately built along the side of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, into which a siding was run from the main line ; and here the firm unloaded the cotton they had bought in Liverpool, and loaded the goods which were to be sold in the Manchester market, or shipped at Liverpool in bales to the various markets of India, China, the Brazils, the West Coast of South America, and other ports with which Fielden Brothers had direct dealings through their correspondents.

In addition to the mills at Waterside, individual members of the firm bought at various times smaller mills in the valleys which run out of the main Todmorden valley up into the moorland hills that surround it. These were all spinning-mills, and were, in the first instance, worked by water-power, aided afterwards by the steam-engine. The cotton was taken to them from the parent mill at Waterside, and brought back there in the shape of yarn to be woven into cloth.

At first the consumption of cotton by the Fieldens was very small. When Joshua Fielden, the father, was in the first years of his cotton-spinning experience, the weekly consumption did not average more than such a quantity as could be brought from Manchester in a one-horse cart ; for in those days there was not even a canal in that region for the conveyance of goods. But as time wore on, as the means of forwarding goods were multiplied, as the general cotton trade enormously increased in extent, and as the name of Fielden Brothers got to

be honoured with a world-wide recognition, the consumption of the raw material at Waterside grew amazingly. In 1846 the consumption of the firm was some four hundred bales (of five hundred pounds each) per week, that being, at that time, probably the largest consumption of cotton of any firm in the world.

About the year 1830, Messrs. Fielden Brothers erected a gas-works to light their works at Waterside. This was the first gas-works established by any private firm, and caused much sensation in the district. The gas-mains were soon extended through what was then the village of Todmorden ; and the inhabitants had thus the advantage of this novel and convenient light long before many of the large towns. In 1845 the Todmorden Gas Company was established ; but Fielden Brothers continued to be dangerous rivals up to the time that the company obtained an Act of Parliament many years afterwards ; and when this was done, a clause was inserted in the Company's Act protecting the rights and privileges of the firm by whom gas had first been introduced into Todmorden, so far as the firm's works and mains then existed, but without any of the restrictions as to price and quality which were imposed upon the company. At the present time the firm supply a considerable portion of the town of Todmorden with gas, and although the price they charge is high—viz. 5s. 6d. per 1000 cubic feet—their gas is eagerly sought after, it having the illuminating power of twenty-four candles.

This is only one illustration out of many which might be adduced in proof of the sterling way in which Fielden Brothers have carried out their own undertakings,

and at the same time benefited the community whose interests are inseparable from their own. Whatever the cost has been, everything with which they have had to do has had to be of the best. In the time of the Civil War in the United States, when the price of cotton was so high, and the strain upon employers and employed was so severe, it grew to be the practice to make goods that were very heavily sized; but Fielden Brothers set themselves against this from the first, and continued to make what was called 'honest cloth,' until their stock of manufactured goods had accumulated to such an extent that the holding of them would have been a serious embarrassment to any firm but one of vast wealth like that of the Fieldens. But it was no use to go on 'kicking against the pricks;' the rage for low-priced articles, irrespective of intrinsic value, had set in with a force that could not be successfully overcome, and in the end Fielden Brothers had reluctantly to follow the new fashion, or cease to manufacture altogether. The latter course they would undoubtedly have adopted, but they felt they could not desert the workpeople who had helped them to build up their prosperity. During the continuation of the cotton famine the Fieldens found it necessary to close their works for a period of nine months, but they did not leave their two thousand operatives to shift for themselves, or throw themselves upon the Relief Committee; they allowed them to come once a week to the mill to clean the machinery, and paid them half their customary wages. In addition to this they set large numbers of men to work at reclaiming waste land, for the mere sake of keeping them in occupation. Sew-

ing schools were established for the women, and, one way and another, the Fieldens contrived to tide their industrial colony over this terrible time without allowing them to be any particular drain upon the charitable funds which were then raised for the relief of the distressed in the cotton districts.

Looking back again for a few years, we find that in 1837 the firm of Fielden Brothers made a noticeable extension of its trading connection. In that year the firm of Fielden Brothers & Co., merchants, of Liverpool, and W. C. Pickersgill & Co. of New York, was established, and two 'outsiders' became partners in this firm, which soon obtained a world-wide reputation. Mr. W. C. Pickersgill became managing partner of the New York house, and Mr. Daniel Campbell occupied the same position in Liverpool. It was to the untiring energy and ability of the former, and to his rigid adherence to the verbal instructions, 'Never make a bad debt, William,' given him by Mr. John Fielden as he was starting for New York, that a large part of the prosperity of the firm is due. At one time, Mr. Pickersgill in New York, in consultation with the Barings, the Browns, and the Rothschilds, settled the rate of exchange by every mail.

From that day to this the prosperity of the firm has been continuous. Joshua, John, James, and Thomas Fielden carried on an unbroken partnership until 1847, in which year the elder brother, Joshua, died. Two years later John died, and James died in 1852. There was now only one of the original Fielden Brothers left, Thomas Fielden, and he and the three sons of John Fielden formed the firm from 1852 to 1869, in which latter year Thomas Fielden died,

leaving Samuel, John, and Joshua Fielden, John Fielden's three sons, sole proprietors of the business. Thomas Fielden, who from 1812 to the day of his death, on the 7th December 1869, resided near Manchester, and was the head of the firm there and in Liverpool, although a keen politician, did not take an active part in public affairs. He was a shrewd, far-seeing man of business, highly and deservedly respected for his upright conduct in all the affairs of life. The success of the firm was undoubtedly largely due to his industry, perseverance, and ability.

Samuel, John, and Joshua Fielden, the three sons of John Fielden, continued in partnership together until 1879, when Joshua retired in consequence of the serious condition of his health. The firm is still Fielden Brothers, and Samuel and John Fielden constitute its proprietary.

It is now desirable that we should make more special reference to the individual efforts of the Fieldens. Although so deeply and so successfully engaged in mercantile pursuits, the Fieldens were no indifferent spectators of public affairs, but were indeed keen politicians. The founder of the firm, old Joshua Fielden, in spite of being a Quaker, was a staunch Tory. His sons, on the other hand, were Radicals, and followers of William Cobbett. The father used to say that his five sons were 'as arrant Jacobins as any in the kingdom.'

John Fielden, the third son, however, was destined to fill the most important position before the public. To begin with, he took an active interest in all local affairs, and, at the age of seventeen, was a Sunday-school teacher amongst the Methodists. He very soon became dissatisfied with

their theological views, and eventually joined the Unitarians, whose doctrines were gradually extending into these remote hill districts. In 1824, he, along with his co-religionists, erected a Unitarian chapel in Todmorden, which he attended, with the members of his family, to the day of his death. The Sunday school, of which he was for many years superintendent, in connection with this chapel was at that time considered the best in the neighbourhood.

The Fieldens, as may be supposed, were earnest and active supporters of the Reform Bill of 1832, and in that year Mr. John Fielden was returned as the colleague of Mr. Cobbett, to represent the newly enfranchised borough of Oldham in the House of Commons.

John Fielden was a man of large heart and broad sympathies, and his exertions on behalf of the poor and oppressed gained him a foremost name amongst the philanthropists of his time. He opposed with all the energy of his strong character the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, for he knew from practical experience, having been an overseer of the poor in 1817, how hardly it would press upon the unfortunate deserving poor. So strong and powerful was the opposition of the Fieldens to the building of a union workhouse as a test of destitution, that it was not until 1874, forty years after the passing of the New Poor Law, that a union workhouse was erected at Todmorden.

The labours of Mr. John Fielden on behalf of the factory-workers will always be held in grateful remembrance. So far back as 1816 he had begun to take an active part in promoting the agitation which afterwards ripened into a general crusade against the oppression to which women and

children were subjected in the factories of the North. When he entered Parliament it was with a firm resolve to leave no stone unturned to obtain an amelioration of the condition of the unprotected factory-workers; and when Richard Oastler, the Factory King, as he was subsequently called, and Nathaniel Gould, of Manchester, threw themselves heart and soul into the Ten Hours Bill agitation, they found nowhere a firmer adherent or a more powerful advocate than John Fielden.

The keynote of the agitation had been struck by Richard Oastler in his memorable letter to the editor of the *Leeds Mercury*, dated September 29th, 1830—a letter which went through the length and breadth of the land like a mighty cry of anguish, and stirred the hearts of men with feelings of the deepest indignation. A more powerful appeal to humanity and justice was probably never penned. ‘Let truth speak out,’ he wrote, ‘appalling as the statement may appear. The fact is true, thousands of our fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, both male and female, the miserable inhabitants of a Yorkshire town’ (Yorkshire was represented in Parliament by the giant of anti-slavery principles), ‘are this very moment existing in a state of slavery more horrid than are the victims of that hellish system, *colonial slavery*. These innocent creatures drawl out, unpitied, their short but miserable existence in a place famed for its profession of religious zeal, whose inhabitants are ever foremost in *professing* “temperance” and “reformation,” and are striving to outrun their neighbours in missionary exertions, and would fain send the Bible to the farthest corner of the globe: ay, in the

very place where the anti-slavery fever rages most furiously, her *apparent charity* is not more admired on earth than her *real cruelty* is abhorred in heaven. The very streets which receive the droppings of an “Anti-Slavery Society” are every morning wet by the tears of innocent victims at the accursed shrine of avarice, who are *compelled*, not by the cart-whip of the negro slave-driver, but by the dread of the equally appalling thong or strap of the overlooker, to hasten, half-dressed, *but not half-fed*, to those magazines of British infantile slavery—the *worstest-mills in the town and neighbourhood of Bradford*! Thousands of little children, both male and female, *but principally female*, from seven to fourteen years of age, are daily *compelled to labour* from six o’clock in the morning to seven in the evening, with only—Britons, blush while you read it!—*with only thirty minutes allowed for eating and recreation*. Poor infants! ye are indeed sacrificed at the shrine of avarice, *without even the solace of the negro slave*; ye are no more than he is *free agents*; ye are compelled to work as long as the *necessity* of your needy parents may require, or the cold-blooded avarice of your worse than barbarian masters may demand!

There was much more in the same highly-pitched strain; but the circumstances demanded something strong and emphatic, and the letter nobly answered its end. It awakened a sense of horror in the minds of the public, and from that time the Ten Hours movement received shape and force, and was carried forward with untiring energy, zeal, and ability by Oastler, Gould, Fielden, Bull, and others. Referring to the part which John Fielden took in this

great agitation, a writer who, in 1857, under the signature of 'Alfred,' published an account of 'the factory movement,' says: 'Mr. Fielden's principles of economical and commercial policy were the results of his own experience formulated into a system; that experience enabled him to construct authentic tables of that branch of manufacture with which he was connected; from details he ascended to principles, and was, in consequence of sincere convictions, a strenuous advocate for shortening the hours of labour in factories, a measure alike favourable, in his judgment, to the interests of the employers and the employed. Mr. Fielden contended that a reduction of the working hours was an indispensable condition of the future success of the cotton trade.' By speech and by writing, by unremitting advocacy within the walls of the House of Commons, and on the platform in the country, he championed the cause of the over-worked factory operatives. Through the columns of the newspaper press he frequently urged his views with telling power, and his work, entitled *The Curse of the Factory System*, put the question before the public in perhaps a clearer light than it had previously been seen in; for to the earnestness of the advocate he added the calmness and lucidity of a mind that favoured, more than all, strict justice and impartiality. 'Honest John Fielden,' the Radical member for Oldham, was the common descriptive phrase when he was referred to, and 'honest John Fielden' he continued to the end of his days. At every stage of the movement Mr. Fielden was in the forefront: at the great meeting in London on the 23rd February 1833, when the Earl of Shaftesbury (then

Lord Ashley) made his first public speech in support of the cause; in helping forward the immense petitions in favour of the original Ten Hours Bills, proposed in the House of Commons by Mr. Sadler; in supporting the Royal Commission of Inquiry; and, at last, in taking charge of the Ten Hours Bill himself, and persistently bringing it forward until, on the 17th of March 1847, it passed the third reading in the Commons by a large majority, and subsequently, on the 1st of June in the same year, passed its last stage in the Lords, and received the Royal Assent on the 8th of that month. Mr. Fielden did not long survive the final success of his great parliamentary achievement, but died in 1849, universally regretted.

The three sons of John Fielden—Samuel, John, and Joshua Fielden—upon whom, since the death of their uncle Thomas, the direction of the business of the firm of Fielden Brothers has devolved during the last thirty years, have, in every respect, been equal to the fulfilment of the eminent and responsible positions to which they succeeded.

Mr. Samuel Fielden, the elder brother, resides at Centre Vale, Todmorden; he is a justice of the peace for Yorkshire and Lancashire, and a director of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

Mr. John Fielden is also a magistrate for Yorkshire and Lancashire, and has occupied the post of chairman of the Todmorden Local Board of Health since its formation. He has recently built at his own expense a coffee tavern and club-room on a large scale, and of much architectural beauty, for the use of the people of Todmorden. His interest in local affairs has always been very great,

and the town has much cause to remember the many useful local undertakings with which he has identified himself. His favourite residence is a large castellated mansion called Dobroyd Castle, which he has erected close to Edge End, the homestead of his grandfather, Joshua Fielden. Dobroyd Castle overlooks the town and valley of Todmorden, and forms the most prominent feature of the hilly landscape in that region, being a familiar object to travellers by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. In this mansion Mr. John Fielden has gathered together many valuable treasures of art, some of his examples of sculpture being amongst the finest that have been produced in modern times, while the internal decoration of the building itself is marked by an elegance of design and an illustrative purpose which are seldom found except in the specially-built mansions of the more successful of our painters. Particularly noticeable are the sculptured friezes of the large hall, upon which have been skilfully and faithfully depicted the successive operations in connection with the manufacture of the cotton-fibre. Mr. John Fielden is also the possessor of Grimston Park, once the country seat of Lord Londesborough, and here the Todmorden 'cotton lord' is accustomed to enjoy the hunting season, and pass from time to time a well-earned respite from his labours at Waterside. Mr. John Fielden bought Grimston Park in 1872 from Lord Londesborough's trustees.

A more prominent part in public affairs has been taken by Mr. Joshua Fielden, the youngest of the three sons of the late member for Oldham. He was educated privately in England and Switzerland; and at the age of

sixteen was taken into the works, where he was employed for the most part in managing the affairs of the office. Early in life he was brought much into contact with public men and affairs, and, acting as private secretary to his father during the memorable Ten Hours Bill agitation, received an excellent training for a public career. With the Fieldens, however, business has always held the first consideration, and it was not until Joshua Fielden had served the firm in which he was a partner with the best years of his manhood and the full limit of his ability—not until he had made himself an ample store of wealth—that he consented to turn aside from the paths of commerce and give himself up to the work of the nation. All the time he was at Waterside, however, he kept himself abreast with current events, and whenever a public question came to be agitated in Todmorden or the neighbourhood, his 'soul was in arms,' and his presence on the platform was looked for and welcomed. In the time of the second factory agitation, when it was sought to increase the working hours of mill operatives from fifty-eight to sixty hours per week, Mr. Joshua Fielden came prominently forward, and, in conjunction with his brothers, did all in his power to keep the law as his father had left it. But it was not to be; their opponents carried the day. It was mainly through the efforts of Mr. Joshua Fielden that the building of the union workhouse was so long delayed in the Todmorden district. Until the year 1868 he did not make any attempt to influence public affairs except so far as he could do so in and from his native town. He felt so strongly, however, in regard to some questions of imperial policy

that he was prompted to publish his opinions thereon occasionally, and his pamphlets and letters on the subject of the repeal of the malt-tax were characterised by an abundance of sound reasoning and a clearness of expression that gained for his advocacy a good deal of notice. In 1868 he was asked by the Conservative Party to contest the Eastern Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire. At the General Election that year he was returned for that constituency along with Mr. Christopher Beckett-Dennison. In 1874 he was again elected for the Eastern Division by tenfold the majority that he had on the previous occasion. He continued to sit until the General Election of 1880, when, in consequence of impaired health, he was compelled to decline being again put in nomination. During the twelve years that Mr. Joshua Fielden sat in Parliament he obtained the confidence and respect of his constituents in a marked degree, and on many occasions distinguished himself in the House of Commons by the clear-headed manner in which he addressed himself to important public questions. Without setting up any claim to oratory, he possessed the art of marshalling facts effectively, and often won his way in argument where a more ornate speaker would have been lost. It is yet hoped, now that he has in a great measure recovered his health, that he will again find his way into Parliament, where, quite apart from party considerations, he is calculated to perform much useful work. Although in the main a firm adherent of the Conservative cause, he was never a mere party tool; but, having the true Fielden capacity and will to do and think for himself, was not always to be relied upon for answering the call of the

party 'whips.' Away from the field of politics Mr. Joshua Fielden has also considerable claim to notice, he having taken a lively interest and accomplished good work in the direction of historical and antiquarian research. He is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and of the Society of Antiquaries; and amongst the Unitarian body, to which he and his brothers belong, he holds a place of great prominence, having been President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

Until the period of his entering Parliament Mr. Joshua Fielden resided at Stansfield Hall, Todmorden; but in 1870 he bought an estate, called Nutfield Priory, in the county of Surrey, which formerly belonged to Mr. H. E. Gurney, of the firm of Overend, Gurney, & Co. Here he erected a beautiful mansion in the Tudor style, in which his artistic taste and his love of the old associations have been brought to bear with admirable effect. On the Gothic arch of the tower entrance there is a moulding, wrought in the form of a winding scroll, upon which is inscribed the motto: 'There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.' One of the most conspicuous features of the interior is a large and commanding commemoration window, erected in the great hall. It is of stained glass, covering nearly the whole of the front portion of the lofty hall, and has been executed from designs by F. R. Pickersgill, R.A. This fine work of art illustrates the history of cotton-spinning from the earliest period, with special reference to the social condition of the operatives and the effect of factory legislation thereupon. The four top lights represent "spinning with the spindle in the thirteenth century;"

the next four lights illustrate 'spinning with the wheel in the sixteenth century;' and the lower four lights give a view of 'spinning by machinery in the nineteenth century.' In order to make this last scene historically correct, Mr. Pickersgill had the advantage of working from sketches of the machinery and dresses of the workpeople made in the Waterside Mills at Todmorden. All these three scenes are designed with wonderful vigour, the groupings being exceedingly effective, while the colouring is rich and striking, without being garish. Indeed, harmony of colour has been so admirably observed in the entire series of pictures, that the eye is nowhere offended by wrong contrasts. In the side lights of this immense window are portraits of Mr. Fielden's father, and his three uncles, Joshua, James, and Thomas Fielden; while on scrolls here and there are inscribed the names of the more prominent workers in the Ten Hours movement—Fielden, Oastler, Bull, Gould, Wood, Walker, Sadler, and Peel. The wretched condition of the women and children in the cotton factories, before the Ten Hours Bill came into operation, is effectively contrasted in these pictures with the aspect of health and contentment which marks the later era, when legislation has been invoked in their aid. The accessories of the pictures have also had much care bestowed upon them, and are very appropriate, including, in addition to a rich display of the white and red roses of Yorkshire and Lancashire, emblematic of the fact that the Waterside works are in both counties, representations of the cotton-pod, the ram's head, and the silkworm, indicating the cotton, wool, and silk manufactures, in respect of

which the Act restricting the hours of labour was first applied. A more notable instance of the employment of stained glass in the decoration of a private mansion could probably not be given.

Mr. Joshua Fielden married, in 1851, Ellen, daughter of Mr. Thomas Brocklehurst, of the Fence, Macclesfield; and they have had a large family. His eldest son, Thomas, married, in 1878, the daughter of Mr. Thomas Knowles, M.P. for Wigan, and resides at Stockeld Park, Wetherby, Yorkshire.

The three gentlemen who now represent the Fielden family have, in combination, done much to enhance the social condition and promote the prosperity of their native town. In 1869 they erected there what is probably the finest Unitarian church in the kingdom. It is a Gothic building of exquisite proportions, having a beautiful spire one hundred and ninety-six feet in height, and containing, inside and out, much decoration of a chaste and costly character. In the interior various coloured marbles have been used with splendid effect, and the chancel window and the rose window over the principal entrance are triumphs of the stained-glass worker's art, the chancel window being especially beautiful, with its series of illustrations of the chief incidents in the life of Christ. A peal of bells, a carillon, and a large organ are the musical features of this noble edifice, which was built at a cost of 36,000*l*. An inscription on the floor of the principal entrance records the fact that the church was erected by Samuel, John, and Joshua Fielden. Mr. John Gibson was the architect. Since its opening the three brothers have invested a sum of 7500*l*., in the names of

trustees, to provide an annual sum for the services.

Besides this munificent gift, Messrs. Samuel, John, and Joshua Fielden have built, at a cost of 54,000*l.*, and presented to their native town, a town hall, as a memorial of their father and uncles. It is a handsome stone building in the classical style, and was erected from the designs of Mr. Gibson. It contains a large and handsome room for public meetings, a courtroom in which the county justices sit, and an extensive series of offices for the transaction of town business. The hall was opened on the 3rd April, 1875, by Lord John Manners, then Postmaster-General, amidst much rejoicing, and at the same time a fine bronze statue of the late John Fielden, of which Mr. Foley was the sculptor, was unveiled, the cost of the statue having been raised by the subscriptions of the factory-workers of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

It now only remains for us, after having thus referred to the individual achievements of the Fieldens, to attempt to give some idea of the industrial concern with which their names have for so long been honourably connected.

Waterside lies at the head of the Todmorden valley, and is hemmed in on either side by precipitous hills. A goodly stream rushes by within a short distance, providing an ample supply of water for the working of the engines.

It was in this situation that Joshua Fielden, the grandfather, made his first venture in the cotton manufacture, entering into it at a time when it was undergoing its most rapid development. Up to the time of Arkwright's inventions the cotton trade had not taken first rank amongst our national industries. A hundred

years before, it was only just beginning to be recognised in this country. Italy and Spain were somewhat extensively engaged in the treatment of this fibre centuries before we took it up in England; and, going still further back, we find India and China manipulating the product of the cotton-tree long previous to the advent of the Christian era. We have all heard the story of Semiramis having invented cotton-weaving; but the people of India claim even to have been in advance of the famous Assyrian queen. It is imagined by some that the expedition of Alexander the Great, 330 B.C., led to the first introduction of cotton goods from the land of the Ganges to Europe. One of the earliest allusions in print to the actual manufacture of cotton in England is contained in Lewis Roberts's *The Treasure of Traffic*, published in 1641, in which he says, 'The town of Manchester buys cotton-wool from London that comes from Cyprus and Smyrna, and works the same into fustians, vermilions, and dimities.' But behindhand as we had been in this industry up to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when once the men of Lancashire had taken it up, they soon outdistanced all foreign rivals; and by the time that the firm of Fielden Brothers had worked its way to eminence and fortune, the general cotton trade of the country had expanded to such a marvellous degree that it became the leading textile industry in the world. As an indication of this great development, it may be mentioned that the annual consumption of cotton in England between the years 1776 and 1780 fell short of seven millions of pounds, while a hundred years later there were not less than 1,175,345,000 lb.

weight of cotton used in the English cotton manufacture, from which 1,040,380,000 lb. were spun into yarn, 211,940,000 lb. going into export as yarn, 698,840,000 lb. as woven stuffs, and 129,600,000 lb. remained in the country for home consumption.

In this great industrial development, as we have seen, Fielden Brothers played a most important part, mill after mill being erected by them, and shed after shed, until the present gigantic concern was the ultimate result. Having been built in so many separate sections, as it were, and with no portion of the older factory buildings swept away, but all still standing as landmarks of commercial history, if not exactly ornaments of the landscape, the Waterside works are not to be compared in imposingness of aspect with many less extensive ranges of factory buildings of a later date. Taking them, however, in their order, as they come, from the first stage to the last, we see each operation of the cotton manufacture being carried on under perfectly convenient conditions, with space enough for all the various processes. There are the Waterside spinning-mill, in which five hundred and sixty-two hands have been employed at one time; the old weaving-shed, containing five hundred looms; the new weaving-shed, with about one thousand looms, covering an acre of ground; and quite a number of smaller buildings, in which the earlier preparatory processes are carried on. Then, farther away amongst the hills, the firm have other works, including the Robinwood Mill, about a mile and a half off, on the Burnley Road; Stoneswood Mill, on the way towards Bacup; and Lumbutts Mill and Jumb Mill, up in one of the hol-

lows of the Blackstone Edge range. At Waterside alone they have three powerful steam-engines—one of one hundred and twenty, another of eighty, and a third of sixty horse-power. When in the full tide of their success, Fielden Brothers also occupied mills at Mytholmroyd, Smithy Holme, Waterfalls, Causeway, and Dobroyd; but as time went on, and the members of the firm found their positions well assured, and as fresh inventions brought about a greater concentration of force, they relinquished some of the outside mills, and now confine their operations to Waterside, Robinwood, Stoneswood, Lumbutts, and Jumb.

A rapid glance through the Waterside works will give us some notion of the present nature and extent of the firm's operations. First, there is the mixing-room, where thousands of pounds' worth of cotton lies piled up in bales just as it arrives from America, and where it is emptied out, looking so full of dirt and rubbish that to the untutored eye it seems as if no machinery in the world could ever make it soft and beautiful; but in its earlier cleansing stages the fibre has some strange and fearful processes to go through. It is estimated that in ninety bales of cotton there are at least 300 lb. of sand, and no end of other impurities; and all this has to be shaken or blown out of it before it can be submitted to the more advanced manipulative operations. First of all, it is passed through a long pipe, into which is introduced a powerful current of air that plays havoc with the dust and dirt. Then we follow it into the scutching-room, where the cotton is put through what is called a scutcher, which has an iron cylinder studded with iron spikes

that catch the fibre and toss it about in the most frantic manner; while a beater, consisting of two iron blades working on an axis, makes violent attacks upon it, the machine making fifteen hundred turns per minute. We now descend to the opening-room, and see the openers at work, with their revolving vertical shafts and projecting discs and arms, and their active fans, and observe the cotton at length rolled upon a beam in the form of a 'lap.' At the next stage we require greater space for our operations. We reach the carding-room, where rows of carding-machines are to be seen at work, with their numberless rollers, wheels, and cylinders boxed off for the confinement of the dust; but, do what they will, the dust lies thick in the air, and constitutes a small mist. The carding-machine is well worth examination. When the box-covering is lifted off, you see a number of rollers of different sizes, each bristling full of teeth made of the finest wire, revolving one upon another, moving at various speeds, and stealing the fibrous material from each other in the most unaccountable way. It is as if they were manipulating a succession of snowflakes. These rollers are in the middle portion of the machine. At one end the beam of 'lap' feeds the machine with fleecy layers of cotton, and at the other it issues forth in the shape of a beautiful gossamer film that passes through a small circular opening, being taken from the final roller by an extremely fine horizontal comb that moves with great rapidity. In passing through the circular opening as 'sliver,' it drops into an oscillating can, which receives it most tenderly. When the 'lap' enters the machine it moves with extreme slowness, as if reluctant to get drawn into the

entanglement of the thousands of teeth that the rollers are anxious to grind it between; but when it has passed the last roller, and has become beautiful white 'sliver,' it hurries off sixty to eighty times as fast as when it entered. A layer of thick cotton one yard long put in at one end of this machine will come out at the other end a layer of eighty or ninety yards in length.

The preparatory processes are now finished. What the remaining machines have to do is to stretch the fibre to perhaps a hundred times its original length, and to impart to it the proper amount of twist. The cotton in its 'sliver' form is very unequal in its formation, and is far from being in a fit condition to go to the spinning-frame. We therefore see the cans of 'slivers' brought to the drawing-frames. Six ropes of 'sliver' pass together between the rollers of the first drawing-frame, the rollers moving with unequal velocities, and producing, by their combined action, a nearly uniform result—the six ropes that enter forming one on emerging. Then six of these sixfold ropes of 'sliver' are passed on to the second drawing, and, after the same process has been repeated, the 'slivers' are put through a third frame, each rope of 'sliver' at the finish being thus two hundred and sixteen times its original strength. One yard has been expanded into thirty-seven yards, and, what is very important, all the fibres are now side by side. The slubbing-frame now takes the cotton in hand. Two ropes of 'sliver' are run together between rollers, and the cotton is wound on to open bobbins, being still further drawn out in the process—one yard being stretched to five or six—while at the same time a slight extra

twist is given to it. Then the roving-frames have a turn at it, giving further attenuation and twist to the fibre, and making it ready for the spinning-frame. Many rooms have to be travelled through in inspecting all these processes, and much clatter and buzz has to be endured; but the workpeople seem happy amongst it all, and go through their duties with an activity and a brightness which bespeak anything but oppression.

From this point there are two distinct roads for the fibre. Such portion of it as is intended for yarn (or warp) is carried forward into the throstle-room, where there is a long array of throstle spinning-frames. The bright spindles of these machines run at the rate of four thousand revolutions per minute, and not only perform the winding and twisting processes, but give a further extension of its length by seven times. It is interesting to watch the working of the little army of 'doffers,' as they call the children who, when the bobbins are full, take them from the spindles with military order and precision. From the throstle the yarn is transferred to winding frames, where it is run on to larger bobbins; and then it goes to the warping machines, where the bobbins are placed in a rack, the ends threaded through large needles arranged in a frame, and then wound round a large circular revolving drum to the required length.

When the cotton-fibre is intended for weft it is taken from the roving-frames to the mule-spinning. This machine is the most interesting and impressive sight in a cotton-mill. It contains a moving carriage that works on an iron railroad, and runs in and out five or six feet at each journey. There are six hundred

to eight hundred threads on each carriage or machine, and as the drawing, stretching, and twisting proceeds they are wound into the form of 'cops,' and are ready for the loom.

We have now only to follow warp and weft into the large weaving sheds to see the cotton worked up into 'pieces.' The two sheds previously mentioned—one containing a thousand and the other five hundred looms—present a most animated appearance. The looms are rattling away at an enormous speed—many of them run at the rate of one hundred and ninety 'picks' or strokes to the minute—and the operatives who tend them have to keep their eyes open and their hands ready for instant action as their machines drive rapidly along. Each weaver has four looms to look after, so there is not much time for loitering. The sight is a very impressive one—a far-stretching scene of bustle and din which to the stranger is almost bewildering.

Messrs. Fielden Brothers have always evinced a lively interest in the welfare of their workpeople, and there has always seemed to exist a feeling of friendliness and goodwill between them and their *employés*. Many of their hands have continued to work for them during a lifetime; they have at the present time men in their employment who have worked continuously at Waterside for over fifty years. Long after the adoption of power-looms, they kept their old hand-weavers with work. Indeed, they had fifty-three of these in their service so recently as 1861; but in that year they relinquished the hand-weaving department entirely, not, however, without pensioning off thirty-five of them; and of this number two are still living and receiving their

pensions, one being eighty-five years of age, the other seventy-two.

The firm which has built up so large and important a concern as that at Waterside, and has done so much to benefit the large com-

munity that it has, as it were, brought together, will not fail to be remembered as amongst the worthiest examples of industrial energy and success, as well as of high individual purpose, that the nineteenth century has witnessed.

THE PANTHEON AT ROME.

'The interior, lighted by a single aperture in the centre of the dome, produces so beautiful an effect that it was currently believed at an early period that the temple derived the name of *Pantheon*, which was applied to it as early as A.D. 59, from its resemblance to the vault of heaven. . . . The surface of the walls is broken by seven large niches, in which stood the statues of the gods, including, as has been ascertained, Mars, Venus, and Cæsar.'—*Bædeker*.

BEHOLD the sacred Pantheon! the home
Of the great gods, whose statues stood serene
Around the massive walls which mighty Rome
Raised to the powers of the world unseen.
But through the open vault, whose dazzling height
Hangs overhead without one pillar's need,
The changeless sky sheds down its tender light
On the new altars of another creed.
So all things change. What men adore to-day,
Another age may trample on and spurn.
And who that stands beneath this vault can say
How soon the saints may vanish in their turn?
Yet stand in faith; for through the dome on high
See how God's light shines changeless from the sky!

T. WESTWOOD TEMPLE.

Rome, February 7th, 1883.

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,'
'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MISS MOWBRAY'S IDEA.

MR. MOWBRAY arrived unexpectedly the next day. He was in excellent spirits, and his aunt was delighted to see him. To Pauline his sudden visit was a little startling, and she wished that he had put it off a few days. Ben Dunstan understood that she meant to marry him, and so she certainly did; but it would have been much easier to tell her own people by letter than by word of mouth. It was not so very easy to tell Aunt Lucia that she had changed her mind, that the man she 'did not even like' was to be her husband after all; but it was sure to be good news to Aunt Lucia; and she was conscious that her father might not be so much delighted, even if he heard at the same time that Ben was to have Croome. Her father was unworldly; he was as sentimental as a woman in his ideas about marriage; and she loved him so much, and cared for his opinion so deeply, that she felt absolutely afraid to meet the incredulous smile in his eyes when she told him that she had accepted Ben Dunstan.

Mr. Mowbray's eyes followed her about the room that evening. He was quite aware that she was pale and distraite, and in the light of his new knowledge he put down these looks to her anxiety to hear of Gérard. If the child cared for him, it certainly

was hard upon her that he should have come and gone without her seeing him.

But Mr. Mowbray with great prudence determined to say as little as possible till he had had his talk with Aunt Lucia. When she said, 'So your French friend is gone?' he answered, with a careless air, 'Yes. We showed him all we could. He is gone back wiser than he came;' and then turned the conversation to something else.

He did not see his aunt alone till the next morning, when Pauline, looking out of her window, saw them pacing together up and down the broad walk in the garden, the same walk where, six or eight months ago, Miss Mowbray had told the obstinate and ungracious Ben that she meant to make him her heir. What was happening there now? Pauline watched them for a minute or two from her high window; they were talking with great animation. She turned away and thought of Ben, whom she had not seen since they parted on the bridge. He was keeping away, of course, in obedience to her wish; she now thought he had better come, and tell the elders himself, but she did not know how to summon him.

In the mean time Mr. Mowbray was talking to Aunt Lucia very seriously, and a serious talk between them was a strange thing: they were too much alike to take each other gravely.

'You had our Frenchman here:

how did you like him?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'He is beautiful to look at,' said Aunt Lucia; 'and I liked his pretty manners. But I suppose he is not good for much, is he?'

'There is not a better fellow in Christendom.'

'O, you think so! And you asked him to stay with you! Well, as Pauline was safe here, I suppose it did not matter much; but you know she only missed him by an hour.'

'You think it would have been a pity to let them meet?'

'An absurdity. How are his matrimonial affairs getting on? He was engaged last year, wasn't he?'

'Yes, but fortunately that was broken off. He never cared for the girl, and she has since married his brother. So poor Gérard is shelved for life.'

'How do you mean?' said Miss Mowbray.

Her nephew gave her a few particulars of the arrangement that Madame de Maulévrier had made for her sons.

'Just like those horrid French,' said Miss Mowbray. 'However, I am glad the Marquis did not submit to it. I wonder if it is possible—but still it is hardly likely. He did an unusual thing, didn't he, in declining to marry as his mother pleased? Did he dislike the girl very much, or what was his reason?'

'Do you expect me to know his reason?'

'If I can guess it, surely you can. You were there last year, and saw the whole thing. Was not Pauline the reason?'

'Has she said anything to you about it?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'That is not a fair question, and I hate to be answered with questions. I am not going to tell you what Pauline says to me. I think

you were very foolish last year, both of you: you let the girl fret herself into a fever, when you ought to have seen what was going on, and brought her away from that château long before. If I had not sent Ben to fetch you, I believe you would have been there now. The child was thoroughly miserable, being made love to by a man who was engaged—and you wonder when I suggest that he is not good for much, and that Pauline had better not meet him!'

'Patience!' said Mr. Mowbray.

'I may have been blind, but I never knew that they troubled their heads about each other at all.'

'Blind! I should think you were! What did you suppose, then, that Pauline was breaking her heart about?'

'I thought she was simply ill.'

'Simply ill! And no doubt her mother thought so too. Well, I hope I have cured her. I think she is getting over it now,' said Miss Mowbray.

Her nephew walked beside her for a few moments in silence. Presently he said, 'I have a great liking for Gérard de Maulévrier. Don't you think him an attractive fellow?'

'O yes, very attractive,' said Miss Mowbray, stopping to examine a pink may-tree that was rushing into bloom. 'Of course, when I saw him, I understood it all.'

'You are right; it was a natural consequence. And you think she has entirely got over it?'

'I don't say that, exactly,' Miss Mowbray answered, with a little hesitation. 'She was startled when she heard he had been here, and, as I say, it was much better that they should not meet. I suppose, however, he does not care for her now, or he would not have gone back to France so

meekly. Pauline is much too good for a changeable Frenchman.'

'If he was changeable, I should agree with you,' said Mr. Mowbray, 'but he is not; he is only hopeless. He is very much in love with Pauline, and I am sure he will never marry anybody else.'

'From what you say, I suppose he has no chance of doing so,' said Aunt Lucia, turning away from her may-bush.

'Unless some heiress takes a fancy to him. He has nothing of his own, he has become nobody in his family, and I see no prospect before him but a very dismal one. He won't marry; he will always live with his mother.'

'Poor Monsieur de Maulévrier! And heiresses in France are not romantic, I'm afraid. Now, if I had been young!' said Aunt Lucia, with a light little laugh. 'But I suppose he would not have liked to live in England, and I couldn't have deserted Croome.'

'I don't know; he admires England very much,' said Mr. Mowbray, entering into the joke. 'And he talked to me enthusiastically of Croome. But his affections were engaged, you see, before he saw you. It is very unfortunate.'

After this they strolled a little way in silence. George Mowbray was beginning to feel like a Jesuit, and to wish that he had not mixed himself up in the business at all. He was also a little alarmed. It did not seem to strike his aunt that Pauline might be the romantic heiress in question, and he was haunted by a feeling of probable disappointment. He did not like to ask his aunt openly what she meant to do for Pauline; her present kindness to the girl made this almost impossible; he, in fact,

perceived that he had undertaken a very awkward commission, and began to wish himself well out of it.

'You seem thoughtful, George,' said Miss Mowbray.

'Well, my dear aunt, these young people and their love affairs are a trouble to me. You might be thoughtful too, if a fellow had talked to you for hours about your daughter, and made you sorry to send him away without hope. I'm fond of the fellow,' said George; 'I can't help it. Nothing would please me better than to see him married to Polly.'

'Really! do you feel like that about it?'

'I do indeed, unfortunately; for of course I can't venture to give him any encouragement. I can't give them anything to live upon, and I can't expect you to do it either; you have been kind and generous enough already.'

'Kind and generous! My dear George, I have done nothing for any of you. You have been kind to me, in letting me have the child all this time. Dear me, this is a strange idea, marrying her to a Frenchman! And you really wish it? You like him enough for that?'

'I like him thoroughly. But I don't flatter myself that it will ever come off. I might as well wish for the moon.'

Miss Mowbray thought over this for a minute or two.

'You say he admires England. He would not mind living in England, then, at least part of the year. We couldn't have Pauline banished to France entirely.'

'As his own old château won't belong to him, I should think it would suit him very well to have a home in England,' said Mr. Mowbray, smiling. 'But this is building castles literally—a childish amusement; don't you think so?'

'Would Pauline like it, I wonder? Yes, poor child, no doubt she would.' Miss Mowbray wandered on, without answering him. 'It's very inconvenient; but, after all, if one person wants a thing and another doesn't, what's the use—he would not make her turn Roman Catholic?'

'I should think that might be arranged. I don't know their rules and laws; but Gérard is not narrow-minded in those things,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'My imagination has not carried me so far as those particulars,' he added, smiling.

'Mine runs faster than yours,' said Aunt Lucia. 'I have a very pretty idea in my head. The only difficulty is to carry it out without being unkind and unjust to other people.'

'What is it?'

'I shall not tell you, at least not to-day. Men's ideas of justice are different from mine, as I have often found to my cost. I must consult somebody, but not you, and if you are a wise man you will let me alone.'

'What are you thinking of? Don't do anything unjust, for Heaven's sake!'

'Don't interfere. How long can you stay with us?'

'A day or two, if you like to have me,' said George.

He saw that his tactics were going to be successful, and was now rather frightened at what he had done. Injustice! what could she mean? Was she going to break any promises for Pauline's benefit, alter her will, perhaps, disappoint the rest of the family? He satisfied himself, however, that she was not likely to do real injustice; in fact, he did not quite see how she could, for Croome and all her fortune was entirely her own; nobody could complain at her doing what she liked with

it. It had never struck him or his wife that she would be unjust if she left it all to Pauline, or to somebody else; of course their hopes had been for Pauline; but now he thought that she could not have decided finally. If everything was settled, she surely would not set to work so readily to overturn it all again. That would be almost beyond Aunt Lucia, though she was capable of most things; and then he reminded himself again that she had a full right to do what she pleased with her own. He tried to speak to her again on the subject, but she silenced him impatiently.

'Be quiet, please,' she said. 'Go in and talk to your daughter, but not about this.'

'Well, no, I should think not,' said George, as he walked away.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DISINHERITED.

'DEAR BEN,—Come to me at once.—Your affectionate

'LUCIA MOWBRAY.'

This was Ben Dunstan's summons to the Court, for which he had been waiting so anxiously. It was like Miss Mowbray to dash off such a note, without a word of congratulation in it, but Ben found it very much to the purpose; he took his hat and set off across the fields without a moment's delay, whistling as he went, in the highest good-humour with the world.

He had never been so happy in his life. The country looked beautiful; it was luxury to breathe the air of spring. Ben remembered that it was May Day as he came out through his garden, and stuck a flower in his coat; this

perhaps was a low and foolish and excited thing to do, but Ben did not think of elegance and dignity; he gave way to his elated happy feelings, which were something quite new to him. At last, at last the day had come; his darling belonged to him; she had told her aunt; she would not be able to doubt and hesitate and keep him at a distance any longer. Ben felt inclined to throw his hat up as high as the trees, but some cows were looking on, and reminded him to be a little reticent. Poor Ben! it was all so absurd, so childish, and the cows with their thoughtful eyes might have guessed the depth of the absurdity.

When he reached the Court-Miss Mowbray was hovering about the garden, waiting for him. She came to meet him, looking so extremely grave that the joy vanished from Ben's face and heart, and a terrible anxiety took its place. Miss Mowbray was almost too much wrapped up in her own thoughts to notice either.

'What's the matter?' said Ben hastily. 'Is she—ill?'

'Who? Nobody is ill,' said Miss Mowbray. 'What made you think so?'

An extraordinary chill came over Ben as she spoke. The momentary fear was gone, but he was his stupid old self again, and knew that all this time he had been dreaming.

'You looked so grave,' he said, 'that I was afraid—your niece—'

Pauline! No, she is very well. She has gone out with her father.

'Is Mr. Mowbray down here?'

'He came yesterday. Come into the study, please. I want to talk to you.'

'Don't you find it pleasanter out of doors?'

'Yes, it is pleasanter; but I

have not anything pleasant to say, and I shall collect my thoughts better in the study.'

'Very well; as you like,' said Ben.

He followed her into the house slowly and heavily, wondering what all this could mean. Had Pauline changed her mind, and commissioned her aunt to tell him so? Yet, somehow, Miss Mowbray's tone in speaking of Pauline made him think that she knew nothing about it. He determined to wait patiently, to tell her nothing, to ask no questions; evidently he would know the worst soon enough; and after all, he reflected, if Pauline had not chosen to say anything yet, Miss Mowbray might be going to consult him on some affairs of her own, quite independent of her niece and himself.

He sat down in the comfortable study, with his back to the light, and looked at Miss Mowbray as she strolled round by the book-cases, pulling a book out here and there in a nervous preoccupied way. He had seen her in this sort of mood before, and had watched her without impatience, with a quaint indulgent smile in his eyes, waiting for what she might choose to say and do next; but to-day it was not so easy to be patient.

'Ben,' she said at last, half looking round at him, and then turning to her books again, 'you always speak the truth, don't you? You said once that you did not wish me to leave you Croome. Did you mean it?'

'I meant it; yes,' said Ben, after a moment's pause. He was startled, and felt almost untruthful as he said this; yet it was true; he had meant it then. She did not ask him if he was in the same mind now.

She evidently did not know

how wonderfully the aspect of things had changed in the last day or two, or she would have understood that what was nothing to him for himself might be much to him for Pauline. What a horrid position, he thought, to depend on the fancies of a woman like this! He wished now that he had had strength to go away in the autumn; he had known at the time that it was weakness to stay.

'Well, then, you won't mind, will you, if I alter my plans again? Now, you see, I have immense confidence in you,' said Miss Mowbray, coming into the middle of the room and fixing her clear eyes on Ben's downcast face.

She certainly had a strange influence over this very different creature, for he was obliged to look up and meet her eyes frankly, though he did not exactly smile.

'A great deal too much, I dare say,' said Ben. 'But any alteration in your plans is your affair, not mine. You can do it without consulting me; why don't you?'

'That would be mean,' said Miss Mowbray. 'I could not do that, and it is nasty of you to suggest it. After all, though, I don't believe you care the least for Croome. You are thrown away here, you dislike the people, you don't see any advantage in being a squire. You told me last year that you would let or sell the place when it came to you, and go back to Forest Moor. You remember saying all that?'

'I do,' said Ben.

'And I don't know, after all, that you have any special right to the property because your name is Dunstan.'

'Certainly not.'

'You knew what my wish was, when I determined to leave it to you. It was not only you that I wished to benefit then.'

Ben nodded. She was inconsistent, she was contradicting herself, but he could not tell her so. Besides, what did it matter? If the old idea had been driven out by a new one, there was an end to it; but he was curious to know what this new one might be.

'One must speak plainly to a thick-headed person like you,' said Miss Mowbray, looking at him. 'I wanted you to marry Pauline. You spoiled your chance in the autumn by being in such a ridiculous, frantic hurry; but as you stayed here quietly afterwards, I thought still she might like you in time.'

Here Ben smiled rather consciously, but Miss Mowbray's eyes were gone to the window.

'I have given it up now, though,' she said. 'It is no use trying to influence a girl against her will. I am sorry, but we can't always carry out our plans in this life, and your characters are so different that I suppose I have been foolish all along; you would never have suited each other. Have not you come to the same conclusion yourself?'

Ben was silent for a moment; then he said, 'It is a natural conclusion.'

'Yes, I thought so,' said Miss Mowbray, in triumph.

'Then what—then, am I to understand—' said Ben, with unusual hesitation; he hardly knew in what form to put his question, and ended by muttering, 'Of course, though, it is no business of mine.'

'I don't want to make any mystery about it,' said Miss Mowbray. 'I am not afraid of telling you; I believe you are too generous to feel yourself ill-used. I have determined to make Pauline really my child, and to leave her everything I can.'

'I am very glad to hear it,'

said Ben. He spoke in a strong voice, and smiled as he looked her straight in the face; this was not such bad news, after all. 'She is quite unfit to be poor,' he went on; 'anxiety about money would spoil all the pleasure of her life.'

'Besides, I want her to marry well,' said Miss Mowbray, 'and when she is known to be my heiress, there will be much more chance of that. In fact, there is somebody now, who is all one can wish, I suppose, except in the matter of money. He is not so well off as he ought to be, and that is the reason why he has held back.'

This was startling news. Ben's imagination began taking wild leaps among the young men of Somersetshire; but strangely enough M. de Maulévrier had ceased to be an alarming object. He was safe out of the way; and besides, there were limits even to Miss Mowbray's fantastic madness. She might have liked the Frenchman better than she expected, but she could never say he was 'all one could wish.' Ben's thoughts were inclined to fix on young Jack Marston, who had long admired Pauline, whose father, Sir John, had a large family and great difficulty with his tenants; but who, of course, being a baronet's eldest son, would be considered a good match, and on his side was pretty certain to look out for a girl with money.

Ben was very thoughtful and silent for a few minutes, while Miss Mowbray, who really felt sorry for him, strolled back to her book-shelves again. In his mind he laughed at himself for a fool: why should he feel the least alarmed at these plans, which were coursing through a silly woman's brain? He wished a little that Pauline had told her;

he doubted for a moment whether he should tell her himself, and then remembered that Pauline had asked him not to do so.

No, he could not give even a hint of the real state of things; it would seem like distrust of Pauline; it would be binding her too soon, committing her before she chose to be committed. But when was he to see or speak to Pauline again?

'Did you say that Mr. Mowbray and your niece were gone out together?' he said at last, looking up. 'Are they walking or driving?'

'They are gone to Cleve,' said Miss Mowbray. 'George wanted to see some of his old friends there. I don't expect them back till six.'

'Tell me,' said Ben, after another pause, 'does she know what you intend? And about this marriage, too—is it—is it her wish?'

'She knows nothing about either,' said Miss Mowbray. 'I was determined to talk it over with you first. I thought that was only fair. I have not even told George, though he and I were talking about her this morning. He does not know that I have ever made a will at all. He would probably think that I was behaving badly to you.'

'No one need think so if I don't,' said Ben. 'She, perhaps, may make a little difficulty.'

'She is a girl; she has no right to an opinion,' said Miss Mowbray grandly. 'Who knows? I may not tell her about that at all.'

'I suppose, at least, you will warn her before the hero comes on the scene,' said Ben, with a peculiar smile.

'These things manage themselves,' said Miss Mowbray, laughing; then in a moment she be-

came serious. 'Yes, I shall tell her all about it,' she said, 'and I shall tell her what reason she has to be grateful to you. For if you had been dreadfully astonished, or dreadfully ill-used, I don't think I should have had the heart to do it. But you understand my motives, don't you?'

'I think I do.'

'My dear Ben, you are much too good for your own interests.'

'You are mistaken. I have one thing to ask.'

'Anything; I think you deserve anything.'

'No, I don't. But I hope you will make these new arrangements as soon as possible. Talk to her, talk to her father, have it out with everybody. Don't let us be in suspense and mystery longer than you can help; there is nothing so tiresome. Make all your arrangements, and send for Mr. Johnson to-morrow. Good-bye; I can't stay now. I must go and see some people.'

'He certainly is the oddest man that ever lived,' reflected Miss Mowbray, when he had shaken hands with her very cheerfully, and walked off at a great pace through the garden; 'and the most excellent. If Pauline had any sense she would like him better than all the foreigners in the world. Yet, when one compares the two, one can't wonder so very much.'

CHAPTER XL.

FAIRY GIFTS.

MISS MOWBRAY had bargained with her nephew that she was herself to speak to Pauline on this subject. He might come in afterwards, she said, and tell her, if he chose, what Gérard had told him. Mr. Mowbray was obliged

to submit, though he was not quite satisfied.

'You don't think I had better write to him first,' he said. 'Suppose his mother was to turn restive, and refuse to hear of it?'

'She is not likely to be such an idiot,' said Miss Mowbray. 'No; you must certainly have Pauline's leave to write to him. It would be too hard on the poor man to send for him, and then perhaps have him rejected after all. He made his offer to you, I understand. You can't take upon yourself to ask him to come here, without some idea that he will be welcome.'

'Perhaps I have that idea.'

'Don't be too sure; girls are curious things,' said Aunt Lucia, shrugging her shoulders. 'No; we will tell the child all about it, and see what she says.'

Mr. Mowbray's heart perhaps misgave him a little, now that his wildest hopes were going to be realised. In the evening, after his return from Cleve, his aunt had told him that her mind was made up; Pauline should have Croome, and her whole fortune, except ten or twelve thousand pounds. In the mean while, if Pauline married, she would allow her a thousand a year.

'She won't want it, you know, as long as she is single, and lives with me,' said Aunt Lucia. 'Dear me, I wish there was not a tiresome man waiting for her. I should like to see the effect on all the young men of this county, and their mothers. The Marstons—they would really be an amusing study, George; you might put them into a book.'

Mr. Mowbray did not enter much into these jokes; Aunt Lucia's talk, the easy careless way in which she scattered her thousands, gave him quite a feeling of insecurity. Who was to assure

one that she would not change her mind again, and make a dozen new wills after this one? He was not often troubled with doubts and anxieties; but now he felt grave and ill at ease.

'I hope you are not disappointing any one—altering any better arrangement?' he ventured to ask.

'The thing is my own, as you have often told me,' replied Aunt Lucia. 'No; the arrangement I am altering is a stupid unsatisfactory one, and nobody is disappointed.'

After this assurance Mr. Mowbray felt happier; but he was still nervous, and began to wonder whether he had done right in speaking to her at all. Perhaps it was his nature to be more buoyant, more courageous in failure than in success.

Pauline lay awake nearly all that night, in anything but a happy state of mind. She now almost wished that she had allowed Ben to tell Aunt Lucia; for the task seemed every hour to become more difficult. Not that she at all doubted Aunt Lucia's reception of the news; but she thought it would be easier when her father was gone back, and he talked of staying at Croome till Monday. This was Friday night; that walk with Ben had happened on Wednesday. He would think her very cruel and inconsiderate if she kept him away much longer. She had heard from Ray, Aunt Lucia's maid, that he had been at the Court that afternoon. She was a little angry with him for this, till Ray added that her mistress had sent him a note; and then Pauline supposed that it was on some parish business, and began to feel sorry for the poor fellow, who had evidently obeyed her and kept silence.

Many arguments, many tor-

menting doubts and fears, were Pauline's company through that night; but at last she succeeded pretty well in conquering them, assuring herself again and again of Ben's goodness and her own wisdom, and resolving to be open and brave and honourable, and to tell Aunt Lucia in the morning. Then she slept long, and came down late to breakfast rather pale and grave, with this burden of confession on her mind. She could not eat anything, and was conscious of a strange sinking at heart, which warned her that she did not care enough for Ben; but she had made up her mind, she told herself, and was not going to change it any more.

After breakfast she went out into the garden—all sweet sunny freshness in the May morning; and presently, as she expected, she saw Aunt Lucia coming to her there. Mr. Mowbray had gone into the study, and was buried among books.

'What makes you so pale, my child?' said Aunt Lucia.

'I don't know. I did not sleep very well,' Pauline answered.

Her aunt took her arm, and they strolled along without saying much more till they came to the warm sheltered seat by the pool in the middle of the garden. The fountain was playing gently, and many birds were singing; now and then a nightingale in the midst of the lilac-bushes broke in with his deep music suddenly.

'Let us sit down for a few minutes,' said Aunt Lucia.

'Now or never!' thought Pauline; and how little she guessed which it was to be!

She waited a moment before she could speak, for her heart seemed to be beating violently in her throat. At last she began in a low quiet voice,

'Aunt Lucia, do you know—'

'Don't interrupt me; I was going to tell you something,' said Miss Mowbray; and Pauline thought, with something like relief, that she must wait a little longer.

'I want to have a business talk with you, my dear child,' said Aunt Lucia, laying her thin delicate hand on Pauline's. 'It won't be the first, will it? Do you really sometimes feel as if you were my child, Pauline? Have I been kind enough to you?'

'Nobody in the world could have been kinder.'

'O yes, they could. I think, on the whole, I have been rather barbarous; for I talk to you as if you were my own child, and yet I have not behaved altogether as if you were. Love ought to be shown by actions, don't you think so? I haven't given you any real reason to know that I love you.'

'I should know it without any reasons,' said Pauline softly. 'You make me quite happy; what more could you have done?'

'Ah, well, I'm glad of that. But if I was really your mother, I should not be satisfied with making you happy now. I should look to the future—that is what good prudent parents do; I should try to make sure of your happiness after I am dead.'

'I don't want to think about that time,' said Pauline. 'But you need not be anxious, dear, for I was going to tell you—'

'Hush! let me go on; I have a great deal to say,' said Aunt Lucia; and then, in the gravest, simplest, most matter-of-fact words, she proceeded to tell Pauline that she was going to alter her will, and, in fact, to make her and Ben Dunstan change places in it.

The girl turned red and pale as her aunt talked; she sat with her

hands clasped, staring with wide blue eyes at Miss Mowbray. At first this extraordinary news seemed to change the whole aspect of life for her; then she perceived that it made no difference. If she was to marry Ben, what did it matter whether Croome belonged to her or to him? Of course, her instinct told her, she was really bound to marry him now; otherwise she would be doing him a deep injury. It would be treason to draw back now; it was impossible. So the first wonderful sensation of freedom and power, which flashed over her when she began to understand Aunt Lucia's meaning, died away at once, and she knew that all this gold was thrown upon her in the form of chains—not an unusual form, after all.

If Miss Mowbray thought of anything but her own plans, perhaps she was faintly surprised that her niece did not exclaim at the injustice to Ben; but then the girl was bewildered, and seemed hardly at first to realise what she meant. After a moment Pauline laid her head against her aunt's shoulder, and cried a little; this was a sort of climax of the excitements of the last few days, and perhaps it was the easiest way out of a difficulty, for Miss Mowbray was always dreadfully distressed by tears, and now thought of nothing but caressing and comforting her. Her quick imagination also pounced upon the cause of Pauline's grief; of course the child was thinking of Gérard, thinking, poor ignorant darling, how all obstacles would now have been removed, if he had only cared enough for her! Miss Mowbray was so sure of this, and so heartily sympathetic, that she took those silent tears, the leaning of that fair young downcast head, in place of all the exclamations, thanks, remonstrances,

which she might reasonably have expected.

'Now, dear, I have something else to tell you,' she said, after a few minutes, when Pauline's sobs had ceased, and she had moved away a little.

After one half look into Aunt Lucia's tender smiling face, her eyes had wandered away to the flowers and the birds; but she seemed hardly yet able to speak or to understand.

'If you cry at *this* news,' said her aunt, 'I shall think you an ungrateful puss indeed.'

'I am not ungrateful,' murmured Pauline. 'I don't know what made me cry. I must tell you, dear Aunt Lucia—I shall feel happier when I have told you—'

'Come, I am not so very stupid,' said her aunt, with an impatient laugh. 'Your thoughts are not so deeply hidden that you need put them into words. I know all about it; you need not tell me.'

'Do you?' said Pauline, bewildered.

'You are a goose; but I suppose you were born so,' said Aunt Lucia. 'I must tell you that his coming here that day was a very good thing. If I had not seen him I should never, never have consented. But though I was rude and horrid to him, as I told you, I liked him very much all the time. I was angry because I did not understand him. If I had known his feelings, I should have sympathised—as I do now, my dear child.'

'What do you mean? I have not the faintest idea what you mean,' said Pauline, flushing scarlet; all her wits had come back to her now.

'You are angry with him, are you? Well, I am not surprised, as you have only seen the surface of things. I did not mean to

joke about it, though, Pauline,' she said, with great sweetness.

'I am not trying to tease you, my child. Monsieur de Maulévrier has told your father of his love for you; and, if you like him, there is no obstacle now, that I know of. To see you happy will be—my greatest happiness.'

Poor Pauline! The first news had been nothing to this, which seemed to fall upon her with a dull, stunning, crushing pain. No, she did not feel the least inclined to cry; but she did not know where to look, or what to say, and she leaned forward, burying her face in her hands with a slight moan.

Then she heard Aunt Lucia saying in quick alarmed tones,

'I have told her too suddenly. Come here, George. She must have some wine or something. I am afraid she is ill.'

Pauline was aware of her father's shadow, as he came and stood before her on the walk, and she knew too that Aunt Lucia got up and hurried away. After a minute he touched her shoulder, and said gently,

'Come and take a little walk with me, Polly.'

She obeyed him at once; he gave her his arm, and they walked slowly and silently towards the farther end of the garden.

'Tell me more, papa,' she said at last. 'Tell me what he said to you.'

Mr. Mowbray looked down at her with a pleased affectionate smile; he perceived that she, at any rate, would not blame him for taking up Gérard's cause, and he thought Aunt Lucia need not be alarmed; the shock of such a surprise as this was not likely to hurt her. He began at once, half gravely, half playfully, to tell her about Gérard.

When, after a few minutes,

Pauline's thoughts flew back with pain to Ben Dunstan, she perceived that it was now too late to say anything about him to her father. After listening with intense forgetful joy to what he was telling her, how could she, for very shame, confess that she had almost engaged herself to another man? Almost; she hardly knew now, in this struggling confusion of thoughts, how far she was really bound to Ben. She was ready to make excuses for herself; that was never very difficult to Pauline; but she knew that her father would not understand them. Loving and indulgent as he might be, he was a man, and he would think that she had behaved weakly and dishonourably; he would be shocked and disappointed. She had tried in vain that morning to tell Aunt Lucia, and now, among these new discoveries, she could not even try to tell him. It was a sort of satisfaction to call herself a few hard names—false, cowardly, mercenary; yet how could she have guessed that after so many months this wonderful thing would come, that the parting at Maulévrier was not final after all? Ah, if only she had had more patience, how happy she might have been now!

'So now the only thing we want is his mother's consent,' Mr. Mowbray talked cheerfully on. 'I don't think she will make much difficulty. I daresay she has reconciled herself to the idea of his not marrying; though no doubt her ambition was disappointed, she was sure to like him staying at home with her. He will have to live in England part of the year, you know, Polly. Aunt Lucia quite expects that—and we owe everything to her.'

'But I was going to say, papa, that can't be,' began Pauline eagerly. 'Aunt Lucia is too kind;

but she must not leave it all to me. I can't have it, really. O, I should be so much happier without it—if she would only believe that. Will you tell her?'

'I can't, Polly, because I don't agree with you,' said her father. 'It sounds disagreeable, but what I say is literally true—without Aunt Lucia's kindness this could not have happened at all. It is the only thing that will make the Marquise consent—your *dot*, my dear—Gérard will be a rich man after all, the richest of his family. Yes, you have a horrid mercenary father, haven't you? But there's no disputing facts—money one must have in this world. If you had been as penniless as Gérard, I should have left him in his hopelessness, and as it was, I took care to be prudent; I wouldn't encourage him much, till I had some notion what Aunt Lucia meant to do for you.'

'But it is unfair—why should she?—no; I can't have it,' said Pauline.

'It is not unfair; it is only what your mother and I have expected ever since she took possession of you. Somebody must have it; why not you? Ben Dunstan was the only person who might have thought he had a claim; but he has enough for himself already, and besides, I have no doubt she will leave him something. So don't trouble yourself, Polly, about other people's business. Be thankful for your blessings, and tell me—shall I write to Gérard to-day?'

Pauline was silent for a minute. Without betraying herself too far, how could she explain to her father what Aunt Lucia was doing? Perhaps it was not her business, after all; perhaps she had no right to tell him the contents of Aunt Lucia's last will, which had been told her as a secret in the autumn.

Yet, if it had not been for this other entanglement, Pauline would probably have told her father that her good fortune meant the opposite for Ben.

'Make inquiries, papa,' she said, looking at him with anxious eyes. 'Don't let Aunt Lucia do anything unjust, if you can help it. I don't want it—it's all very difficult, and I don't know what to say.'

'Aunt Lucia is not likely to do anything unjust,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'Her whims are always generous, and this is rather a sensible one. Take my advice, put money matters out of your head, and tell me if I may write to Gérard to-day.'

'No, not to-day,' said Pauline, after another pause. Her father looked at her in some astonishment; her eyes fell, she was flushed and confused, and tried to explain herself.

'You must give me time to think,' she said. 'I don't understand anything yet.'

'It is a very simple case; what do you want to think about?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Wait till to-morrow, I will tell you then,' said Pauline.

She left him and went away to the house. Near the door she met Aunt Lucia, who held out her hand, saying, 'Well, how are you now?'

Pauline took her hand and kissed it, but did not look or speak, and hurried on into the house without stopping more than a moment.

'French fashions already,' laughed Miss Mowbray to herself, as she walked away towards the garden.

CHAPTER XLI.

'IN SLEEP, A KING; BUT WAKING,
NO SUCH MATTER.'

MR. DUNSTAN was generally at home on Saturday afternoon, and was supposed to be writing his sermon; but to-day, being impatient, restless, and almost angry with the person he loved best in the world, he wisely felt that his mind was not fit for sermons, and went out instead to dig in the garden. This was an unusual occupation for him; but something violent seemed necessary. Another long day was nearly gone, he had not seen Pauline or received any message from her. Surely she must have told her aunt by this time, and her father too. Perhaps Mr. Mowbray was putting a spoke in the wheel; he might think that if his daughter was to be an heiress, she might marry some greater man than the Rector of Croome. That somebody, that horrid somebody Miss Mowbray had hinted at—Mr. Mowbray might very likely be inclined to favour him. But then Pauline!

'What a brute I am!' said Ben to himself; and he pulled off his coat, threw it on the grass, and went on digging with great fury for several minutes. The earth lay in brown furrows, sending up a fresh living smell into the sunshine.

Ben's arms began to ache very soon, and he stopped to rest for a moment, sticking his spade into the ground. Then he was conscious of a step, of a presence, and looking round he saw Pauline standing on the lawn. He was in his coat in a moment, and went forward with a flushed face to welcome her; the joy of seeing her banished all feelings of doubt and fear, leaving only remorse for them.

She was very pale; she was tired with her walk in the sun; and if her manner was rather grave and cold and strange, that of course was because Miss Mowbray had been telling her of the ridiculous change of plans, and she thought, dear generous girl, that it might vex him. As if it mattered a straw! That, no doubt, was why she had come to him, instead of sending for him.

Ben restrained himself nobly, and only showed his joy in his eyes; he rushed into the house and brought out a chair into the quiet sheltered corner of the garden where he had been digging his new rose-bed. Pauline, who was really very tired, was glad to sit down, and Ben threw himself on the grass near her.

'I didn't expect any visitors,' he said, glancing at his hands, and then at her. 'You have caught me in the rough, you see.'

'Are you fond of gardening?' said Pauline dreamily.

'No, I hate it,' said Ben. 'But I wanted something hard, and digging takes it out of you as much as anything, if you put your strength into it. You have kept me waiting a long time,' he added after a moment.

'Have I?' said Pauline.

'You know you have. However, now you are here, I mustn't say a word of reproach. I know why you have come,' he said, 'and why you look so troubled. Don't look troubled; smile.'

His own smile, of trust, content, and a love deeper than Pauline could ever know, the tone of his voice, which made one quite forget his rough exterior, touched her to the heart. She put up her hand to her eyes, and said, 'I can't,' with almost a sob of pain.

'My dear, what is it?' said Ben. He got up, and came and stood with his hand on the back

of her chair, looking down at her; but she kept her head bent, and turned away from him.

'There's no reason why you should be dismal about it,' said Ben. 'I trust you and you trust me; but I suppose they have been telling you that it won't do—is that it?'

'No; they don't know,' said Pauline, finding that she must give some answer.

Ben was puzzled, and began to frown; but his voice and manner were still quite tender and gentle.

'Are you vexed because your aunt means to alter her will?' he said. 'I don't care the least; I told her so: she sent for me yesterday and told me all about it. It seems rather foolish, perhaps; but I could not explain to her, you see, how unnecessary it is, because I had promised you. It was rather a pity not to tell her at once. And do you mean that you have not told her yet? Shall we go down together now—when you have rested?'

'No, no,' said Pauline. 'Please go away—go a little farther off, because there is something I must tell you.'

Ben immediately obeyed, and went back to his former place on the grass. There was nothing to be read in her face, however long and earnestly he might gaze; she was looking down, flushed and agitated, wondering how she could tell him—how this painful interview was to end. She had come, feeling that it was the only thing she could do—that there was no way of making amends to Ben; and as she came she had composed a long explaining speech to tell him that she had changed her mind, that she had behaved to him very badly, but that indeed Aunt Lucia's change of purpose was no fault of hers. And then, she thought, all must depend on

Ben's generosity. If he was dreadfully hurt and injured, she must give up the bright future that lay before her now; must absolutely refuse to be Aunt Lucia's heiress—if that was possible—and must make her father tell Gérard to forget her really, as he seemed to have done in all these months past. Not that she would marry Ben; no, never; and he must at any rate be made to understand this. All these sad thoughts had made Pauline feel quite heroic as she climbed the hill to the Rectory; she felt like a martyr; she was sacrificing herself. To what? To her faithfulness to Gérard, who after all had been faithful to her.

But, of course, when she was face to face with Ben all her fine words and explanations fled; she was so sorry for him, and also for herself, who had such horrid painful things to go through, that she could hardly speak reasonably; and the thought flashed across her, with wonder and regret, that she might have trusted her father with everything, and begged him to make Ben understand. He might have been surprised and angry at first; but he would have helped her out of the scrape, she thought, for in his mind her life and Gérard's were quite bound up together.

However, here she was, sitting in Ben's garden, with his grave face, his anxious eyes watching her, and his earnest voice saying that he trusted her. There was no escape; somehow, without looking at him, she must tell him that she did not deserve to be trusted. She was afraid, beginning to realise what his disappointment would be, and how the love of such a strong nature might be turned into something worse than anger; but then after all she remembered that he was a good man, and this thought

gave her more courage. After a silence, during which Ben watched her as if fascinated, hardly knowing what he thought or feared, she began to speak suddenly.

'I forget what I said on Wednesday. I did not promise, did I?' A curious flash came into Ben's eyes, and he turned a little pale.

'You let me understand that you meant it,' he said, in a low voice. 'You did not actually promise in words. You said I was not to hurry you; but you talked of telling your aunt. I took it as a promise. Do you mean that you have changed your mind?' he went on, in a louder harsher tone. 'You like the plans they have made for you better, no doubt. Of course you can do as you please now, but—you are behaving—you are false and cruel to me!'

'Don't frighten me,' said Pauline, in a whisper.

'I give you back your promise. I was a fool ever to ask you again,' said Ben.

He sprang up, and walked away from her to the far end of the lawn, where it opened on a wide distant view, his church spire in the foreground, peacefully pointing up among fir-trees.

Pauline sat still; she could not defend herself, and she knew he was right to be angry; but she began to think in a dismal desolate way that there was no hope for her and Gérard, and that everything must be as it was before; for how could she injure this man still further by taking his inheritance?

It seemed a long time—perhaps it was five minutes—before Ben came back to her. He had conquered himself sufficiently to speak without passion.

'Tell me the meaning of all this,' he said. 'I want to know the truth; but if you say it a

thousand times I shall not believe that money has anything to do with it. You are not throwing me off because your aunt has told you. You have some better reason than that.'

Pauline dared not yet look at him, but she felt almost grateful; it was easier to speak now.

'I will tell you the truth,' she said. 'I am very sorry—'

'I asked for the truth,' said Ben, in a tone that brought a deeper flush of colour to her face.

She would have liked to walk away without another word; but she had brought this thing on herself, and it was necessary to go through with it. His scorn, perhaps, made it easier, for it roused a little defiant spirit. He need not be rude and odious, she thought; and certainly she need not trouble herself to express any more regret, which after all was real.

'When Aunt Lucia first told me about altering her will—I shall now beg and entreat her not to do it'—she said coldly, 'I thought as you did, of course it does not matter; and I was beginning at once to tell her about you. I began three times, and she would not listen; she had so much to say. Yes, you are right, I did mean it on Wednesday. I have felt lonely and unhappy for a long time, and I thought you would be good to me. But when I got home that day I was not happy, and I knew it was not all right, for my feeling was only selfishness after all.'

'Of course,' said Ben, as she paused for a moment, 'I knew your feeling was not like mine—how could it be? But you might have trusted me; I would have been good to you; I believe you would have been happy in time. You know all that, though, and you have some better reason still.'

'Yes; some news that my fa-

ther brought,' she answered. She was getting braver every moment now. 'He said that Monsieur de Maulévrier wished to come, wished to know if I—in fact, if I would be glad to see him, and I could not say I would not.'

To this Ben made no answer at first but a slight exclamation. Presently he said,

'Thank you. I see it all now. Your aunt gave some hints the other day which I really did not understand. Well, that is all, I suppose. It was kind of you to come and tell me; and now I'm sure it will bore you to stay here any longer. Indeed, the only kindness you can do me is to go away, and never let me see you again.'

Pauline was standing up now, quite calm and able to look at him; the worst was over.

'But I have one more thing to say,' she said. 'I don't ask you to forgive me; I suppose you never will, and I can't expect it. But I must tell you that, whatever the consequences may be to me, I will not have Croome; I will not have it all taken away from you and left to me. Rather than behave so meanly, so horribly, I will give up all the happiness. I mean I will have nothing that depends on my having Croome. Do you understand?'

'Yes, I understand,' said Ben.

He had suddenly become gentle, and his hard contemptuous manner had departed. It was strange to Pauline, even at that moment, to feel the depth and strength of her influence over him.

'I do understand,' he said; 'but you are quite mistaken if you think that sort of thing is a comfort to me. You might have a little satisfaction in the thought that you were acting generously,

and giving up all you cared for in life because I was a disappointed fool. But do you think I want you to be miserable? do you think I want Croome? I hate the place. I really shall go away this time,' he said, with a faint smile, 'and never trouble it again. There, you couldn't help it, after all. Don't apologise; don't try and mend what's far beyond your mending. Go away now; that's all you can do; forget all this nonsense and be happy.'

There were tears in Pauline's eyes as she stood and looked at him.

'I won't have it; I can't,' she said, in a low voice.

'My dear, you will do as your aunt and Mr. Johnson choose,' said Ben.

He walked off towards the house, as if he meant to leave her there; but, after a few steps, he came back again.

'That fellow,' he said, 'forgive me, but it was him all along, I suppose. Well, I've suspected it. But your father does not know half enough of him; he can't tell whether he is to be trusted.'

'Yes, he can,' said Pauline, very low.

They walked silently together across the grass, and to the gate which led to the path through the fields. There she shyly held out her hand, but Ben took no notice of it; he walked on beside her, down to the lane, across the bridge where they had talked on Wednesday, to the willow-shaded path that led along by the river. All this time neither of them had spoken one word. There at the gate he took her hand and grasped it, and looked at her for a moment steadily, almost smiling.

'Good-bye,' he said. 'God bless you. I hope I may never see you again.'

Pauline's lips moved, but she made him no answer. Just like the other day, he let her turn away under the willows, and walked off himself along the lane, perhaps not quite so cheerfully.

CHAPTER XLII.

IN THE FAUBOURG.

AFTER that day, nobody had any time or thoughts to bestow on Ben. It is to be supposed that he went through his church services on Sunday, and preached two sermons as usual; but Pauline, after a sleepless night, did not find herself able to go to church; Miss Mowbray, always regular in her ways, stayed at home too, and Mr. Mowbray employed the morning in composing a letter to Gérard. It was such an important letter that he wrote it three or four times over. Pauline, going into the study after he had done, found several rough copies torn in two and lying on the floor; she collected them carefully, lighted a match, and burned them on the hearth.

Ben, of course, did not come to the Court at all that day, but the next morning Miss Mowbray had a note from him, telling her that he was going off immediately for a month's holiday. He had telegraphed to an old acquaintance of his, an unattached parson, to come and take his work for him; this man had done the same thing before, and had been liked by the people.

'He will be here in three days,' wrote Ben, 'and will look after Lyne. Consider whether you will give him the living; his wife would like it, and I cannot stay much longer.'

'What has the stupid creature taken into his head now?' said

Miss Mowbray. 'He was quite cheerful and contented the other day, when he came to see me. Give the living to that man! certainly not. He is one of the dullerest men I ever met, and his wife is insufferable.'

But she did not trouble herself very much about Ben and his doings. If he wanted a holiday, let him go; he would come back in a better humour; and this parson's wife, who was an invalid, was not likely to bore her by coming with him now. Miss Mowbray's thoughts were entirely taken up with Pauline and Gérard; when would he write? when would he come? She sent a note to Mr. Johnson, asking him to come and see her, and was rather vexed to find that he had gone away for a week or two.

'Well, it does not matter,' she said. 'A few days can't make any difference.'

Mr. Mowbray could not stay with them at Croome any longer. He had had an offer from a good firm of publishers for *Royalty in Shadow*, and having set his daughter's affairs in train, he started off to London on Monday in high spirits, and full of projects of his own. It really seemed as if Fortune was beginning to smile on him and his family. So Miss Mowbray and her niece were left alone, and those were certainly the strangest days in Pauline's life. Days of waiting, of looking forward to a future which, though likely in fact, seemed to her thoughts impossible and unbelievable. She walked through those days in a dream. The flowers bloomed that May more brightly than ever; the nightingales sang at all hours in the garden; the old Court looked its best; and Pauline wandered about under the blue sky, or sat still with a book she did not read:

in truth, she could do nothing but wait. All ideas of usefulness were given up now; the girls of Croome were not likely to be taught anything by this other girl, who was, as it were, sitting in the midst of a summer dawn, waiting for the great warm golden sun to show himself above her horizon.

These were not unlike the dreamy days at Maulévrier, except that those dreams had been hopeless and painful, while these were only bright forerunners of a reality. And yet, somehow, Pauline was afraid to be happy. I do not know that she was haunted by the thought of Ben, who had forgiven her, and had wisely taken himself out of her sight. She was surrounded with care and tenderness. Aunt Lucia, in arranging her future, seemed to have doubled her love for the girl whose happiness she had taken into her hands so fearlessly. Everything looked bright for Pauline, and yet she was afraid. The days were vague and calm, but dreadful dreams came at night, and more than once she started up to find herself crying and trembling, she did not know why. Perhaps there was still something remaining of the weakness of last year; and also, ever since Gérard came to England, her mind had been painfully excited; these fancies would no doubt be cured by the sight of him.

Mr. Mowbray's letter was posted, and went on its way to France. Gérard had told him at the last moment that he was not going straight back to Maulévrier, but thought of paying Victor and Françoise a little visit in Paris; and he gave Mr. Mowbray the address of their apartment.

The young Comte and Comtesse were at present remarkably happy

together; they had enjoyed the winter thoroughly, and were still more enjoying the spring; they went out a great deal, and Paris was to both of them the most fascinating place on earth. They had rooms in one of the fine old hotels of the Faubourg St. Germain, in the heart of Legitimist society, and were very popular among their neighbours. Madame de Coigny, Madame de Loches, all the gay people who had assembled at Bois carré to meet the Prince of Catalonia, with many others of their kind, and more still of a quieter, but not less loyal, disposition, were the daily companions and friends of Françoise de Maulévrier. She was not fast, or a flirt, being in love with her husband; but all these ladies, who would have startled the propriety of Madame de Brye, liked the little thing, called her piquante and simple, and enjoyed the small knowledge of the world and its ways which she had picked up at Tourlyon.

Victor was equally successful; he had always been popular, and now that life had arranged itself so pleasantly for him, he was much happier and better-tempered than of old.

Françoise was now quite ready to like Victor's family; she behaved very well to Madame de Maulévrier, and was even resigned to the thought of spending a few weeks with her in the summer; but her favourite was Gérard; and both she and Victor were really pleased when he wrote from London to say that he would pay them a visit on his way home. Then Victor suggested an addition to this plan. He had seen his mother a few weeks ago; she had not seemed well, and had talked of consulting a Paris doctor; how would it be to ask her to come now, to meet Gérard?

they could then go back together to Maulévrier. Françoise did not even make a face at this proposal; she said pleasantly,

'Just as you please, mon ami. If you think your mother would like to come, I shall be very glad.'

Gérard came, and Madame de Maulévrier came also. Her pleasure at meeting him, and finding that his English visit had brightened him in a wonderful way, put her at once into the best of humours. The doctor also was encouraging; and her daughter-in-law had no trouble in entertaining her, for when she was not with Gérard some old friend was sure to lay claim to her. People who had known her; who had known her parents, her brothers and sisters — old counts, old duchesses, who might have seen the Revolution — came out of their ancestral hôtels in the Faubourg and welcomed her among them again. Françoise found that her own importance was certainly increased by her belonging to that forgotten reclus, the Marquise de Maulévrier; she was amused, but she bore it all very well. Even the admiration bestowed on Gérard did not affront her, though it seemed like a reflection on Victor for being shorter and less handsome.

One day, when Madame de Maulévrier had taken Gérard to breakfast with an old friend, the Comte and Comtesse, having breakfasted together, strolled out into the garden behind the hôtel. It was one of those quiet old gardens that are found in the heart of Paris, perhaps not unlike the garden where Clive and Ethel Newcome talked once 'in an avenue of lime-trees, which are still permitted to grow in that ancient place.' There were statues, too, very much the worse for weather, and a dreary fountain

green with moss; but even here it was May; the sun shone, and the shadows of the limes, with their young little leaves, fell flickering on the even gravel where Victor and Françoise walked, and on their heads when they sat down on a bench near the fountain.

'Yes,' said Victor, 'my mother has still an idea of Mademoiselle de C——.'

'But, Victor, it is impossible. Poor Gérard has nothing.'

'She has enough for both, if she would only fall in love with him, and if her mother would only appreciate him.'

'O,' laughed Françoise, shaking her head. 'Maman expects too much; and besides, I know very well that Gérard will never marry.'

'Has he told you so?'

'O—yes—you must have heard him say it a hundred times. Here he comes; that is odd—escaped already from Madame de C——.'

Gérard came down the steps from the house and joined them. He was looking well and very handsome; certainly much less melancholy than before he went to England.

'My mother has gone out driving with the C——s,' he said, 'so here I am. How pleasant it is under the trees! these limes remind one of Maulévrier. I am glad to find you here together. I wish to consult you, Victor, and you too, Fanni, for you know my history.'

Françoise opened her large eyes, and fixed them upon him with a wondering smile.

'Go on,' said Victor.

'Do you think it is impossible for me to marry?' said Gérard.

They were almost too much startled, both of them, to answer him instantly, and he coloured

as he looked from one to the other.

'I see you do,' he said.

'Not at all, my dear, not at all,' said Victor, with unusual earnestness. 'Nothing would please me better. Why should it be impossible? Money is the only thing wanted, and if that—'

'We were only surprised because you have so often said you never would, you know, Gérard,' said his sister-in-law. 'And I thought you would probably keep your word. But no one will be more glad. Tell us all about it, please.'

'To begin with, who is she?' said Victor.

Gérard coloured still more. He was sitting in a corner of the bench, Françoise being at the other end, and Victor in the middle. He stooped forward and looked on the ground, smiling; it was a difficulty to pronounce her name. At last he raised his eyes, looked at his brother, and said very deliberately,

'Mademoiselle Pauline Mowbray.'

'The English girl!' exclaimed Françoise, in a kind of consternation.

Victor gave her a glance and an expressive shrug; then, stroking his moustache, he turned gravely to Gérard.

'But, my dear fellow, she is no doubt beautiful and charming, but surely her father has a large family; he never was very rich, and last year he lost the little he had. Have they suddenly come into an immense fortune?'

'Why, Gérard,' said Fanni, 'did not you go to see them the other day, in a small house near London?'

'All that is true,' said Gérard, 'and you are both right. Without some wonderful change of circumstances, our marriage must

always have remained impossible. But the change has come.'

'*Mon Dieu*!' sighed Fanni; and her husband muttered some other exclamation.

'*Mademoiselle* Mowbray has an aunt,' said Gérard, 'a very rich person—charming too; I saw her the other day at her old country house. Her niece has been living with her for some months; she has in fact adopted her, and is going to leave her her fortune. Now I told M. Mowbray the other day that his daughter was—that only circumstances hindered me from proposing myself to him as his son-in-law—and he told me what he thought probable, the kindness, the great generosity of his aunt—she is an old lady, you understand—and I have now had a letter from him to say that this is all settled, and still more, that, if I wish to come to Croome—that is where the aunt lives—I have only to write and announce myself, and she will be happy to see me.'

'And you have made up your mind?' said Victor, after listening to these wonderful disclosures.

'You know my only difficulty—my mother.'

'Ah, yes, indeed!—*Anglaise*, *Protestante*; she no doubt has prejudices,' muttered Victor.

'But, Gérard, it will make you so very happy,' said the kind little sister-in-law, bending forward with congratulating smiles. 'A good fortune, and what you have always wished. Ah, don't I remember—'

She drew back, laughing and colouring, for her husband's eyebrows went up a little, and for the next few minutes she did not say much, but listened with interest as Gérard went on talking to his brother, telling him frankly all his plans and hopes, all the

ideas that had been suggested by Mr. Mowbray's letter.

Victor did not approve much of this English marriage. He disliked the English, and had taken no fancy to the Mowbrays. His brother's infatuation for Miss Mowbray had always puzzled him, though certainly he had reason to be grateful to it. He thought in his own mind that Gérard had better not marry at all, unless he could marry a rich Frenchwoman of his own rank. But, as Aunt Lucia once said, heiresses in France are not romantic; they—or, at least, their relations for them—always expect an equivalent; and Gérard, with all his fascination, had not a penny in the world. *Mademoiselle de C—*, for old family reasons, might have been just possible; but, of course, that depended first on Gérard, and his resolution was plain enough—he would marry this English girl or nobody.

Victor did not think his mother would consent—he rather hoped she would refuse point-blank; and he did not believe that Gérard would have courage and obstinacy enough to resort to a '*sommation respectueuse*.' On the whole, Victor was not pleased, though he dissembled his feelings, and talked the thing over with Gérard in a friendly reasonable way. He felt that any strong objection would come awkwardly from him, who owed his present position in life to Gérard's withdrawal.

Françoise, whose mind was not so practical as her husband's, sympathised far more heartily. She liked Gérard very much now, better than any of the family, except Victor, and it often troubled her to think that he was to spend a long dull life alone with his mother at Maulévrier, just because his people and hers had made a mistake about them at the

beginning. If they had found somebody else for him—somebody he cared for, and who cared for him—his life might have been different, poor fellow, and he might never have met Mademoiselle Mowbray at all. But as he had met her, and was so very much in love with her, and as she was to have plenty of money after all, Françoise thought that nothing could be better. Very pleasant and amusing for Gérard, to have an estate in England, and to spend a part of the year there. She could see no objection, and in her mind she thought that his mother would be wrong and barbarous and selfish if she refused her consent to such a happy arrangement for him. So she listened with great interest to all that the brothers were saying, and encouraged Gérard with smiles and nods—a pleasant relief to Victor's considerate gravity.

They had been talking some time, when Madame de Maulévrier appeared. Madame de C—— had brought her back on the return from their drive, and she was evidently in a good temper. The young men got up to make room for her; she sat down beside Françoise, and talked for a few minutes of the people she had seen.

'Jeanne de C—— is one of the prettiest and most charming girls I ever met,' said she. 'What do you think, Gérard—do you agree with me?'

'Oui, ma mère,' said Gérard absently.

'You are not enthusiastic,' said the Marquise. 'Now it strikes me that one seldom sees such a girl.'

'She certainly is very distinguished,' said Victor.

'As to you, Victor, I did not expect you to admire her so much; she is not the sort of person for you. Pardon, chère enfant, there

are different kinds of perfection; everybody must allow that. But that tallness, that fairness, that je ne sais quoi of goodness and dignity—I know that if Gérard had to describe a perfect woman, she would not be so very unlike Jeanne de C——.'

'Yes, maman, you are right; we all agree with you,' said Fanni, nodding and smiling.

'The Vicomtesse is of course anxious to marry her well,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'Jeanne is nineteen—would you have believed it?—and she has already had twenty offers; but her mother means to let her choose for herself to a certain extent. I don't quite agree with her—young people are foolish, even the best of them—but the Vicomtesse and Jeanne are both inclined to think more of a man's character than his fortune, and the girl is too good to oppose her mother seriously. Madame de C—— is really very unworldly—marvellously so—I am not sure that she would not even accept my poor Gérard, if he was to offer himself.'

Madame de Maulévrier turned round quickly, and looked at Gérard, who was standing with his arms folded and his eyes on the ground. It seemed possible to Françoise, who was watching him, that he had not heard a word of what his mother had been saying.

'Under the circumstances could he offer himself?' said Victor, with a half smile.

'That is the difficulty. I don't know. I might manage it for him,' said the Marquise.

There was a little silence. Victor and his wife both looked at Gérard, Fanni's eyes full of amusement, mixed with anxiety; how or when would he crush his mother's springing hopes by telling her his own?

They were not long in suspense. Gérard came a few steps nearer to his mother, and lifting his eyes to her face, with an earnest resolute expression which startled her and caught her attention at once, began in simple words to tell her all that he had told the others just now. At first she frowned, hardly understanding him; then, as he went on, she turned very pale.

'That girl!' she said. 'You marry that girl! Never! Do you think I have forgotten—'

Gérard coloured crimson.

'It was my fault, mother,' he said. 'It was my doing all along; it was no fault of hers.'

'You are talking foolishly,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'Merci! I prefer young ladies who have been properly brought up. Is it possible! I hoped that madness was forgotten long ago.'

'Madness or not,' said Gérard, 'it will never be forgotten as long as I live. It is my life—think a little before you take it away.'

Madame de Maulévrier laughed. He turned from her, and walked off down the avenue, unable at the moment to control his anger and disappointment. Françoise looked after him sadly.

'Victor,' said Madame de Maulévrier, 'your poor brother is out of his mind. Had he told you all this fine history before, then? What did you say to him?'

'I said that I thought your consent doubtful.'

'Doubtful! you might have been more positive. What do you think? Does it not seem to you absolute madness?'

'Its only redeeming feature is Mademoiselle Mowbray's large fortune,' said Victor quietly.

'And mamma—that Gérard adores her,' said Fanni, leaning forward eagerly.

'I knew that, my child, long before you did,' said Madame de

Maulévrier. She sighed: her sudden passion had left her, and she raised a sad and careworn face to look after her son as he walked down the avenue. 'People who consider those things,' she said, 'who allow themselves to be ruled by adorations, are utterly unfit for the business and duties of life. Your brother has all the winter been so depressed, so unlike himself, that I was even glad for him to have the distraction of visiting that odious England. Little did I think what was to come of it. Certainly, though, it seems amazing that her parents should encourage Gérard. Far better for the girl to marry a countryman of her own, with money, which all the English have. But her father is just as thoughtless and romantic as Gérard himself; and her mother, good stupid woman, probably has nothing to do with it.'

'It is perhaps useless to fight for ever against these romantic people,' said Victor, with philosophy. 'The worst feature in the case, to my mind, is the necessity of living so much in England—taking Gérard away from you. Otherwise, the people are *comme-il-faut*, the young lady is certainly handsome, and these English fortunes are very safe and substantial.'

Victor was rather surprised at himself as he said this, and felt magnanimous. Fanni also had her word to put in.

'Poor Gérard has not had much brightness in his life, mamma. You might make him very happy now.'

'If Gérard chooses to marry an Englishwoman—a Protestant too—and a girl whose character I despise,' said Madame de Maulévrier, 'it will be nothing to me if he lives all the year in England. I have done my best to make his life happy; if I have failed it has not been my fault. These are

strange times we live in, when a son chooses his own wife, and thinks he can drag consent out of his mother. I suppose if he cannot have it he will do without it; this English "adoration" is so strong. Mon Dieu, what times! and we talk of loyalty and obedience; what mere words they are!

'I think you are mistaken, ma mère,' said Victor. 'If Gérard cannot have your free consent, he will not attempt to do without it.

I believe I can answer for him so far.'

'Bah! You always take Gérard's part, when I am angry with him,' said the Marquise impatiently.

She got up and walked towards the house, leaving the two under the lime-trees together.

'Maman will consent, will she not?' said Fanni, laying her hand on her husband's shoulder.

'Yes,' said Victor.

(To be continued.)

NOVEMBER.

SILENT and still

Riseth the mist in a shadowy strength,

Clammy and chill,

Dooming the days that they shrink and they cower

Choking and wan from its darkening power.

Cold, and it penetrates whither it will;

Moist, and it permeates working for ill;

Stealthy and sure

Creepeth misleading the mist in its length,

False to allure.

But 'tis not here—

Here, where the flames from the black diamonds bound

Brilliant and clear;

Here, where in greeting the head I love best

Nestles in welcome and joy on my breast!

Tender the ministries, sweet the home-ties!

What of the mist? here its potency dies.

Dear is the home,

Dearer and brighter than all the year round

Now is the home!

SISTER ROSALIE, THE MOTHER OF THE POOR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,' 'VALENTINA,' ETC.

IN one of the poorest quarters of Paris, the Faubourg Saint Marceau, there is a narrow street that joins two wider ones, running parallel with each other. These two are the Rue Mouffetard and the Rue Gracieuse; the narrow one, which meets them at right angles, is the Rue l'Épée de Bois. This little street, for nearly fifty years, was almost as well known in Paris, both by rich and poor, as the Rue Saint Honoré itself.

There were no rich people in that quarter; there are none now. The people who live there are all poor, their houses are wretched, they are unhealthy, their lives are dull and hopeless. Even French light-heartedness fails before the troubles that beset them. The Faubourg Saint Marceau is little known by strangers; there is nothing to see, nothing to amuse people, in that maze of poverty-stricken streets lying away beyond the Seine, south of the Luxembourg Palace and the Church of Sainte Geneviève. It is a little bit of the dark side of life, in the brightest and most beautiful of cities, a contrast that makes it easier to understand revolutions, and teaches true hearts to give and work, if they may only hope to see things a little better than they are.

Yet this small faubourg was very happy, from the early part of this century to the year 1856, in having for its centre a house in the Rue l'Épée de Bois, where a woman lived whose name will never be forgotten in Paris. The house was a *maison de secours*, of

which there were many scattered here and there in the different districts of Paris. They belonged to Government, and were put under the care of the Sisters of Charity, who had to manage, in connection with them, a dispensary and a school, and to distribute a certain quantity of clothes and food to people really in want of them. In fact, the sick and poor of the faubourg were in the Sisters' charge, and all these poor wretched creatures looked to them as their best friends, from whom they might expect everything that was good. There are not in the world better or more devoted women than may be found among these French Sisters of Charity; but it is not often, even among them, that one meets with such a genius for doing good as was possessed by Sister Rosalie, the head of the house in the Rue l'Épée de Bois, the real guiding head, as she became by her character, of all the charities of Paris.

To get an idea of her work, one may as well spend a day with her in the home where her life was passed, and which for so long was the one hope and refuge, in their painful daily life, of thousands of sad hearts. Her plain faded little parlour, with its matted floor, its simple prints on the walls, its few books, its bureau, its 'two armchairs and four straw chairs,' its piles and packets of letters and printed papers, was visited, on an average, by five hundred people a day. There she received them, the bright sweet-

faced little Sister, in her black gown and white cap with great flaps. Among her friends in Paris there were a number of young men, some of them of noble families, who were always ready to help her by acting as secretary for the day, her correspondence being far beyond her own strength. Such a statement as this seems strange enough at first, but let us wait till we see her visitors. It is a cold rainy day in spring. Her promised secretary has already arrived; a pleasant-looking young man; his servant, who took his horse at the door, called him 'Monsieur le Comte.' He finds Sister Rosalie already talking to a poor pale needlewoman who is out of work; she is sent off first to the soup-kitchen to have her breakfast, and then with a recommendation from the Sister to a lady in the Faubourg Saint Germain.

'Good-morning, Sister,' says the secretary. 'You will hardly have your crowd to-day. People will be glad to stay indoors, whatever their troubles are.'

'Ah! do you think so?' says Sister Rosalie, smiling. 'We shall see.'

Then she wanted some letters written—one to the prefect of a department, one to some distinguished physician, one to a bishop, one to the colonel of a regiment stationed in the south, to the station-master at Lyons, to a charitable count in Brittany. Her friends were all over France, or rather those whom she wished to make friends to some one in whom she was interested. The young man had soon received his instructions, and as he worked away with his pen, voices outside showed that a crowd was gathering, and in they came, the long string, one by one, the poorest always first. Thin, wistful, sunburnt faces, limp caps, damp blue

rags clinging, hands stretched out wildly or wrung in entreaty, hollow eager eyes wandering round the room, and then fixed full of faith and longing on Sister Rosalie's calm and gentle face. These were her children, and not good children by any means, most of them. It seemed as if they had no claim to be loved, except that often useless one of being poor and miserable.

Here was an old man in a ragged blouse, tottering and trembling. His creditors had seized his goods and turned him out of doors; what was to become of him? He had been long ill, could not work, the good mother knew it. He told his story in a weak quavering voice, and soon had a promise that sent him away happy; he should be admitted into the Old Men's Home.

Here comes a black-eyed mother with two babies in her arms; may she take them to the Crèche? She is a stranger in the quartier; her husband is a mason, and fell from a high scaffolding six weeks ago. Will the Sister come and see him, and will she find work for the poor wife herself?

'But yes,' says Sister Rosalie. 'Take your little ones to the Crèche, my good woman, and then come back to me. I will do what I can for you.'

The next visitor is a pretty girl of sixteen or seventeen, dressed with all the neatness and good taste of a happy young Frenchwoman, but pale and anxious-eyed. She runs forward to kiss Sister Rosalie's hand.

'Fanchette, my child, what brings you here? I thought you had left us altogether,' said the Sister seriously.

'O mother, I am come back. I could not stay in that place, and I can't go home. Father is so unkind to me.'

'We will talk about it. Go up-stairs to Sister Mélanie, and ask her to give you some work among the linen.'

Fanchette's face brightens, and she runs away up-stairs, pushing her way joyfully through the crowd at the entrance.

Another girl, whose steady face promises perseverance, comes to ask for a situation, and Sister Rosalie gives her a letter to the good religious head of a washing establishment on the Quai. Then a wounded soldier limps in on crutches, to get the all-powerful 'mother' to apply for a pension for him. Then a little brown-faced boy with a shaven head brings in a pitiful story; mother is ill, and he and his brothers and sisters are all starving.

'And your father, my little Jeannot?'

'Father has been drinking for this week past, and we have no money. Mother says he promised you never to touch it again, but he has!'

'Hush, my child! say nothing against your father. When you see him, tell him to come and speak to me. Here are bread and meat tickets for you; run along.'

Then there was a lad who had come up from the provinces to make his fortune in Paris; a dream that so many have dreamed, little thinking that it might lead them to the saddest of all ends, starvation in the midst of plenty. This poor fellow was a farmer's son, who had quarrelled with his father and run away from home, arriving penniless in Paris, where he felt sure of getting work at once. It was two months ago now, and the cruel hard reality had done its worst for him. How he had lived so long he hardly knew; one or two little jobs had kept him from starving, but now

he was almost too weak and ragged for any work. He had wandered in his homelessness, away from the brighter streets, which had attracted him so wonderfully at first, into the poor mean Faubourg Saint Marceau, a fitter refuge for poor unfortunates like himself. There he heard people talking of 'the Mother of the Poor,' how she lived in the Rue l'Epée de Bois, and never turned away any one, bad or good, who went there to her for help. So this morning, after a night under an archway, he dragged himself that way, and joined the waiting crowd about her door. Now that he found himself in the presence of the good mother, the shame of his rags and his wretched appearance overcame him, and he could not find words to tell her his sad story. She looked at his face, dark, downcast, full of wounded pride and misery, and saw at once that this was not a common beggar. He stood before her silent, asking for nothing, and it was only by kind, patient, repeated questions that she drew out his story.

'We must write to your father, my poor boy,' said she.

'O no, Sister; he will never take me back.'

'At any rate we will try. Pinard! Is it a name of your country, Monsieur de Montgard?'

The secretary looked up, hearing himself addressed. The boy turned round and fixed his large dark reproachful eyes upon him.

'Certainly, Sister. There is a Pinard among my tenants.'

'It is my father,' said the boy hoarsely.

'What! you Claude Pinard? But no wonder I did not know you, my poor fellow,' said the young nobleman.

'I suppose, monsieur,' said Sister Rosalie, after a moment's pause, 'that I may trust Claude

to your care and that of madame your mother?

‘Without doubt, Sister. I will find something for him to do. He will belong to our household till we go into the country.’

For the present poor Claude was sent to the soup-kitchen, and to the Sister who had charge of the clothing dépôt; for the Count's servants could hardly be expected to tolerate him in his present plight.

One has not time or space to tell the misfortunes that brought every one of that motley crowd to the little street where they knew they might lay their burdens down. Some who had been helped and trusted over and over again, and had disappointed all the good Sister's hopes, came again, and were helped and trusted once more; for this was one secret of Sister Rosalie's power—she never gave up any one.

As the day passed on a different class of visitors began to appear: the ladies and the young men who visited for her in the quartier; they brought their reports, and had to be supplied with all kinds of lists and directions. Then there were strangers—people who wished to ask about her institutions, and to gain help and advice for their own; members of associations that had in some way been brought into life by her; messengers from the Court, about royal charity, for every ruler of France, while she lived, took her into his counsels; bishops and clergy, who looked on her as an honoured friend; the Spanish ambassador, who found time, in the midst of business and society, to visit regularly for her in the faubourg; the Little Sisters of the Poor, who came to her for help in all their troubles. Then there were fine ladies, in their carriages, who came

to offer help, always gladly received, or to ask for advice and sympathy from her who knew people's hearts so well. There were poor teachers, begging her to find them pupils; there were children to be admitted to her orphan asylum; and, strangest of all, there was a Protestant minister who wanted a post. Sister Rosalie did her best for him, as she did for every one, and soon found him the help he wanted among her rich friends; but his coming to her at all shows how well she was understood in Paris, how people believed in her goodness, her true philanthropy, which never questioned any one about his creed before stretching out a hand to help him. This is a rough sketch of one day. When one thinks of Sister Rosalie's long life, all spent thus in doing good, and of all the possible troubles that may befall people in such a city as Paris, one understands how she is missed and will not be forgotten.

Such scenes as I am going to describe now might have been gone through more than once by Sister Rosalie. It was a terrible winter of famine and distress, and the sufferings of her poor would have been beyond any powers of relief but hers. It was not long before the second visitation of cholera. Three terrible things came together to Paris about that time—the end of Louis Philippe's reign—famine, revolution, and pestilence. In times of revolution she did not retire from the scene, as so many women would have done, but went among her people more than ever, and used all her influence to keep them quiet. She was so far successful, being supported by all the best of her neighbours, that in the revolution of 1848 the Faubourg Saint Mar-

ceau, though dragged at last into the struggle by agents from other quarters, had patiently borne its share of the general distress, and was to the last unwilling to rise and fight. In the early spring of that year, before any disturbances had really broken out, let us imagine Sister Rosalie alone in her room one Sunday afternoon. She is reading Bossuet's *Sermons*, one of her favourite books. After the week's hard work her eyes and head are weary, for she is no longer young and strong now, and perhaps the first symptoms may have already shown themselves of the blindness which clouded, though it could not sadden, her last years. Suddenly there is a noise outside: the portress is disputing with some man who insists on seeing Sister Rosalie that moment.

'But, my good man,' she remonstrates, 'why cannot you come to-morrow morning? Our mother is unwell and tired; you might give her at least one afternoon's rest in the week.'

But the applicant persists, and Sister Rosalie herself calls out, 'Let him come in.'

A wild-looking fellow presents himself before her in the roughest and most careless dress of a Paris workman, but with something pleasant in his frank bold manner.

'Sister, will you come with me to my mother's house? She has a pack of aristocrats starving in the garret. They will take nothing from any one; they are ill, and will all die like dogs, and a good thing too!'

'Certainly I will come,' says Sister Rosalie, without noticing the last words. 'What is your mother's name? Is she a friend of mine?'

'You know nothing of her, but she knows plenty of you.'

'Where does she live, then?'

'I shall show you.'

Even with her long experience the portress must have been anxious when she saw the Mother set out along the street with this rough stranger. He led her a long way out of the faubourg to a narrow street near one of the quays on the Seine. He seemed anxious to get his task done as soon as possible; to take her there and have done with it without any further communication; but this was not Sister Rosalie's idea. She talked to him all the time; and the young fellow, who was not naturally sullen, was obliged to give himself up to the charm which had conquered so many before him. She found out his name, his history, his opinions, which were violently Republican; she was used to that among the workmen. He found that this gentle Sister dared to disagree with him, and to tell him very plainly what she thought. Perhaps he had never before heard such a stern sermon on the views and hopes of himself and his comrades. She told him that no true liberty could be gained by violence; that overthrowing order and breaking laws was not the way to secure justice and peace; that revolutions were bad enough for the upper classes, but self-murder for the poor—bringing work to a standstill, killing hundreds by starvation, and sure to end in suffering, whether after victory or defeat. Sister Rosalie had a right to speak of all this, for, as she told her companion, she had seen enough of it in 1830. Then she had been the one person who kept any order in her faubourg: in the wildest moments of the revolution she had gone along the streets safe in the love and respect of the people, when the police dared not show them-

selves. She had ordered down barricades, had saved men from being shot or hanged by the mob, and afterwards had given a refuge in her house to many on both sides who were in danger. If she protected the Royalists, she had also a kind hand ready for the Republicans—they were all alike her children. Men of opposite parties found a hiding-place in the Rue l'Epée de Bois. After the fighting was done, she helped several to escape from the police, and had she been any one but Sister Rosalie, would have been arrested herself in consequence. So she spoke with authority to this young man, when she warned him of his foolishness.

His mother, a rough, forbidding-looking woman, came to meet them at the door. She had heard of the good Sister, she said; and it seemed as if nobody else could do any good to these people upstairs—fools of aristocrats—they would ask for and accept nothing; the father and son were ill, and the daughter who waited on them would soon die; she was a shadow already. As to helping them, the Sister could see that she was a poor woman; yet she had offered the young man some bread before he was taken ill; but he made her a low bow, and declined it. Come, the Sister would go up and see for herself.

'You should have sent to me before, my good woman,' said Sister Rosalie quietly.

She climbed up flight after flight of the dirty staircase, and reached the garret at last, where these people had found a wretched refuge. She knocked gently at the door.

'Come in,' said a sweet young voice.

There were two straw beds on the floor: the father, brown and wasted, with a long gray beard,

lay asleep in one; in the other a young handsome man lay flushed and moaning, and half delirious.

A fair slight girl, with white lips, and a wild frightened look in her eyes, came forward to meet Sister Rosalie.

'Madame—Sister,' she faltered; 'sit down, I beg of you.'

'Mademoiselle,' says Sister Rosalie, with tears in her eyes, 'may I venture to tell you what they call me in my district?'

'Mother, I should think,' says the girl, gazing into her face with wide blue eyes. 'Can I do anything for you?'

The strange absent manner of the words filled Sister Rosalie with still deeper pity.

'Yes. You can do me a very great favour. You are in trouble; allow me to help you. You have lost your mother; is it not so? Let me take her place.'

'I think I may,' said the girl, glancing from one side of the room to the other. 'Papa and Charles will not know, will they? And who are you then, mother?'

'Have you ever heard the name of Sister Rosalie?'

'O yes; but'—shaking her head sadly—'I forgot. You must excuse my bad memory. We are Protestants; we do not belong to you.'

'My child,' said Sister Rosalie gravely and sweetly, 'God is your Father and mine. Now, let us see; what is the matter with your brother?'

'The woman of the house says it is a fever, from not having enough to eat.'

'Ah!'

An hour later, Sister Rosalie descends the stairs again, and finds her guide loitering outside the house-door.

'I want you to go back with me, Jean. I have to send a nurse to these poor people, and some

blankets and provisions. You can show her the way, and help to carry them.'

Jean stares, but walks off without a word.

One can easily imagine how Sister Rosalie would care for such a family as this, dragged down by misfortunes from their original rank, made still poorer by their pride; how she would watch over the father's death-bed, rejoice in the young man's recovery, and find him work not impossible to a gentleman; how she would place the girl in some happy home, where her lips might grow red and her eyes quiet, and the natural spirits of youth might come back to her again.

As for Jean, one can fancy her meeting him again later in that year, when Paris was in a flame of revolution—meeting him in a red cap, with a pike in his hand, one of the wildest of Republicans.

There is a story of her having saved an officer of the Garde Mobile, who had attacked a barricade in the Rue Mouffetard. He was alone among the enemy, and his only chance for life was to rush into the Rue l'Epée de Bois, into the door of the Home itself. The revolutionists were there almost as soon; but they found the Sisters of Charity on guard at the door, refusing to give up the fugitive. They listened with respect, even at such a time as this, to what Sister Rosalie said to them; but they still insisted on having their victim. As they crowded about the door, pointing their guns, Sister Rosalie fell on her knees before them. This was what she said:

'I have devoted my life to you for fifty years. By all I have done for you, your wives and children, I ask this man's life of you.'

She had won the day. They cheered her, and moved away,

leaving the officer in her hands. Perhaps Jean was among them.

This revolution was soon followed by the cholera, through which Sister Rosalie fought bravely with her little band. They went into the most terrible scenes of suffering and death, and not one of those who thus faced the disease took it.

Perhaps it was even more in the long course of her every-day life among them than in these special times of sickness and danger that the people learned to love Sister Rosalie. If they were not grateful to her, it would indeed be wonderful, for, besides all the personal help she gave to their bodies and souls, the institutions she founded for them were so many and so good. There was help for those of every age. Her first foundation was a large school for poor children, in the Rue de Banquier. An industrial school was united with it, and both were in the care of some of her Sisters. Then she set up a Crèche, a nursery where poor mothers who go out to work can leave their babies during the day, and also an infant school. One of the best institutions was the 'Patronage,' a society for watching over young girls who had left school. This was joined by many ladies, and every Sunday they met these girls in the Rue l'Epée de Bois, taught them, and made friends with them. The girls themselves, as they grew up, were formed into an association for watching over their younger companions, and both these societies did an immense amount of good. Perhaps one of Sister Rosalie's own favourite works was the Old Men's Home in the Rue Pascal.

Rosalie Rendu was born September 8th, 1787, in the country of the Jura. She came to Paris

in 1802, and immediately joined the Sisters of Charity at their house in the Rue du Vieux Colombier. Her first years of work were spent in the Rue des Francs Bourgeois Saint Marcel, from which she was moved to her life-long home in the Rue l'Épée de Bois. She often suffered from ill-health, and for the last two or three years from blindness. In 1852 she received the Cross of the Legion of Honour, perhaps never more worthily bestowed. She died on February 6th, 1856, after suffering for two or three days from pleurisy and fever, and thousands of her children followed the Mother of the Poor to her grave in the cemetery of Mont Parnasse.

Perhaps this faint sketch of the doings of a good woman will be best ended by repeating some of her words, as they are put into English by the loving writer of her life.

'The Sisters of Charity are posts on which all the world may come and rest their burdens when they are weary.

'Mademoiselle, what is your object—to offer yourself a sacrifice to God? Well, then, what business have you to choose the nature of that sacrifice? Let your sacrifice be that of submitting your will to those whom God Himself has made your first law.

'Don't be hard upon the poor, my children, but love them; the

world says they are idle, and stupid, and vicious: and it is an easy way to escape trying to do them good. But if we had gone through what they had, if our childhood had been like theirs, I doubt if we should have been any better.

'Charity is like God Himself: the more you ask, the more she will give; wherever you start a really useful work, means for carrying it on are certain to start up; wherever charity sows a grain of mustard-seed, you may rely upon it there will soon be a large tree.

'Always keep one hand wide open to give, and the other to receive.

'We must learn to leave God's service for Himself, and to leave prayer for the poor.

'Love, if you wish to be loved.

'Be like clear water, that has neither colour nor scent.

'I was brought up in the fear of God, and not in that orange-flower-water devotion some people seem to like so much.

'If you don't want to fall, take for your crutches confidence in God, and mistrust in yourself; and if you fall, imitate little children, who tumble down, cry for their mother's help, and get up again quickly, comforted, and go on.

'Let us have a child's mind towards God, a mother's love towards our neighbours, and the strictness of a judge towards ourselves.'

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER LXV.

WHICH BEGINS WITH COLLISION AND
ENDS WITH EXPLOSION.

IN his almost hysterical excitement, which carried him up to the zenith of delight and down into the nadir of remorse, the Major had wit enough left to see that the open air and solitude were best for him. So he went out for a stroll and a mouthful of fresh air. Now, as he was not strolling, but walking along with some violence, he met Eugene Ruddock, and, curiously enough, Eugene Ruddock was at that very moment thinking of Major Sanctuary. For Mrs. Ruddock, full of the indignity that her husband had undergone, and detecting beneath the Major's thin veil of sympathy a face of ridicule, had at her own table spoken very bitterly of the Major as one ready enough to laugh at his friends when he got the chance. Eugene's self-respect had been grievously wounded in the person of his father, and he felt very properly indignant with the Major, for whom he entertained a secret scorn, knowing how that anxious parent was trying to entangle him with Victoria. So young Narcissus resolved that whenever he got the chance he would pay Major Sanctuary off. The chance came sooner than Eugene could have expected, for within one hour here was the Major walking down upon him in the open street!

'I'll cut him dead,' Eugene said

to himself. 'Look him full in the face—wait for *his* salute—and cut him dead!'

It was dignified, aristocratic, terrible, and Eugene starched his visage and knitted his brows, and made ready for the encounter.

'He will come after me,' reflected the great young man. 'He will ask for an explanation. And *I will explain!*'

On came the Major, and on came Eugene. Full in the face Eugene looked the Major, and the Major returned his gaze steadily. Then with the haughtiest countenance possible, and eyes sternly set on the enemy, Eugene marched inflexibly by. But what was his surprise when the Major, with neither anger nor wonder in his face, nor any change of expression whatever, went hurrying down the street, as if Eugene had not been there at all! In fact, so absorbed was the Major with his own tumultuous thoughts, that he had seen Eugene and not seen him at the same time. But of course the young man could not understand this. He could only conclude that in some occult way the Major had perceived his intention, and had baffled it by giving the cut he was meant to receive; and so Eugene had to go through that most painful and unhealthy process of repressing noble rage at the very moment when the cork of civility was about to fly up sky-high, and the emotion was to rush out in a splendid deluge.

There was no redress, for the Major went out of sight like a rocket, and, in a mood of irascibility such as seldom pervaded his dandified mind, Eugene held on his way. The next person he met was Hector Badger. Now, Hector experienced something like a sense of shame when he saw the son of the man whom he had so lately humiliated. This sense of shame communicated itself immediately to his tell-tale countenance; and Eugene interpreted Hector's rising colour to indicate fear of him, the stalwart Eugene! So he marched up and faced the enemy.

'You are a vulgar, impudent brute!' he said, with astonishing firmness.

'Eugene,' Hector replied quietly, but without any sign of fear, 'I don't wonder if you feel angry, but your father gave me great provocation.'

'I tell you what,' cried Eugene, growing bolder, 'you are a bully and a coward!'

And the little fellow, with a tremendous air, shook his switch in Hector's face.

'I will not answer you,' Hector replied calmly. 'The fact is, Eugene, I don't think the worse of you for being so hot over it.'

He said this and not another word, but, gently putting Eugene aside, passed on; and for the second time our minikin was left pondering the nature of things in mid-street.

This encounter had remarkable consequences. Upon his return home Hector told his mother of Eugene's rudeness, and Sally for a wonder commended her son's peaceable behaviour.

'I am glad you did not knock him down,' she said, nodding her head. 'It must have been a great temptation.'

'No, mother,' Hector answered.

'You see, he had provocation. Then, mother, he is a dwarf!'

'One thing I know,' cried Sally, 'you shall not be insulted in the street. I will write to Beatrice, and say that this sort of thing must cease.'

She looked about for her writing materials, and remembering that she had seen them last in her own room, she bade Hector fetch them, which he did; and Sally sat down to the table like a field-marshal writing a despatch.

'I shall let those people see we are not afraid of them!'

The next moment Hector heard an exclamation.

'What a very singular impression on the blotting-paper!' Sally said. 'Figures—writing! I tell you what, Hector, those people in the house are using our writing-paper!'

'Think so, mother?' Hector answered carelessly.

'No, I don't think so,' the brisk Sally retorted. 'I am sure of it. I wish I could make out this writing, and then I could have proof positive.'

'It is easy enough to make it out,' Hector said: 'hold the blotting-paper up to the glass.'

'What good will that do?' his mother asked, falling by habit into the old contemptuous way in which she used to address her son.

'Let me show you,' Hector replied, taking the blotter in hand, and reflecting it in the mirror as he spoke.

A great surprise was in store for mother and son. Clear as handwriting could be, this inscription came out in the glass before their eyes:

'July 15, 1874.

Daniel Ruddock, Esq.,

Two Thousand Five Hundred Pounds.

£2500.

SAMUEL BADGER.'

'Hector!' exclaimed the astounded mother.

'Mother!' exclaimed the astounded Hector.

'What can it mean?' said Sally, almost breathless. 'Daniel Ruddock—two thousand five hundred pounds—Samuel Badger! Why, Hector, this is just the sum we have in the North-Western Railway. What can Daniel have to say to it?'

Hector made no answer. He was pale and agitated, and seemed, to his mother, to be gradually coming to some terrible conclusion.

'Hector!' his mother cried, now in genuine alarm, 'what can it be? Speak to me!'

Before Hector could reply, Samuel himself walked into the room. For several days his manner had been abstracted and careworn; and now, taking no notice of either wife or son, he sat down and rested his head upon his hand with a heavy sigh.

'Sammy,' his wife called out, 'what is this?'

'What is *what*, Sally, my love?' Samuel asked, with a vague apprehension in his voice.

'Look here,' Sally answered, holding the blotter up to the mirror.

The dismay of Samuel Badger was great. He shook from head to feet, turned deadly white, and his lips moved but made no sound. Sally marked all these tokens with a wife's experienced eyes.

'Samuel,' she exclaimed, dropping into a chair, 'this is something dreadful, I feel sure.'

'O, not dreadful, my dear,' Samuel replied, when he found his voice. He forced a faint smile to allay her fear—a glint of frosty sunshine trying to thaw a frozen field. 'Not dreadful—not so bad as that.'

'What is it, Samuel?' cried

Mrs. Badger, with a kind of terrified impatience. 'Tell us this moment.'

'The fact is,' Samuel said, with a gasp, by way of preface, 'this town of Tickenham is going to rise, my love, and the waters are going to be popular, and people are coming here to live—coming in thousands, it is said—and they will want a people's park, you know, with houses and gardens, and a place for the band to play, and all that sort of thing, you see, Sally, my love!'

'Well, well, well!' cried Sally, 'what has this to say to Samuel Badger and Daniel Ruddock and two thousand five hundred pounds?'

'The fields over there—where the park will be, I believe—belonged to Daniel; and if he had the health he would see about getting up the park himself; but he has not the health, you see, Sally, that's where it is; and Daniel's opinion of me is that I am a man of business, and he has sold the land to me at a very moderate price.'

'Those fields where the cows feed?' Sally asked, in a scarcely articulate voice.

'Yes, my love,' Samuel replied, a little more cheerfully. 'The cows are not to stay there. The cows will have to go.'

'And you have paid all that money for those few acres of meadow?' Sally inquired again. She was unable even now to believe the awful truth.

'Yes, love. Daniel daresays he could get five thousand or more for the piece if he tried.'

'And our money is all gone?' Sally asked again, as if she would sound the calamity to its lowest deep.

'Yes; but the land is there.'

'The land!' roared Sally, now breaking fairly out. 'What is the land!—marsh, hedge, and

ditch! And you have robbed me of my money—for it was mine, not yours; and you have actually, without my knowledge, ruined us, after all my years of labour! What right had you to touch my money?

'You see, Sally,' Samuel said, 'you know what Scripture says about the wife being the weaker vessel. I thought that you, being the weaker vessel, Sally, of course I must be the stronger vessel. Then I am the head of the family, and the responsibility rests with me about managing affairs; and so I said nothing to you, but acted on my own judgment, and took Daniel's advice.'

'I tell you what it is, Samuel Badger,' his wife cried, going up to him, and speaking with a fierceness the like of which he had never witnessed. 'You have defrauded me. You have put your hand in my pocket. You have thrown away the provision I made for my old age, and for yours too. Samuel, with all your weakness, I always thought you a man of honour until this day; but I think you so no more; and I declare I have a mind to walk out of this house, and never see you again!'

Samuel cowered before this outburst of fury. He did not utter a word. He only put his head into his hands, shaking it sadly and hopelessly, as if all were over now. And Sally stood with outstretched hand, denouncing him by her gesture after she had ceased to denounce him with her tongue.

All this time Hector had not spoken. He had been pale and agitated; but now, as he watched his mother, an expression of gentleness and resolution effaced his look of fear. He went to her side, and took her hand, more of a man—Sally was struck by that

even in her excitement—than he had ever seemed before.

'Don't say all that, mother,' he said gently. 'You don't mean it. Father did his best, and you will think so one day. What is he in Daniel's hands? Besides, mother, think how much worse things might have been. You see, I am grown up now, and I can take a school, and we shall do very well, after all. Then remember the whole of the money will not be lost. Anyhow, don't say all that to father.'

Sally looked up at her son; then she went across to her husband, and, laying her hand on his shoulder, she said, in a softened voice,

'I ought not to have spoken so, and I did not mean it; but O, Sammy, Sammy, you have broken my heart!'

And poor Sally, vanquished at last by resistless life, fell into a chair, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER LXVI.

AN AWFUL DOUBLE KNOCK.

WHILE so many of his friends were enjoying themselves in Tickenham, Jerome Dawe stayed quietly at home. In fact, Jerome had found out all at once that he was grown an old man. For months his walks had been shrinking into narrower circles; a few paces cut off each day; a road which he had for years trod morning by morning quietly omitted at the end of a week; shops, where he would drop in for a chat in his stately style, left unvisited, until, by furlongs and perches, the whole of his daily round was given up. At last he was forced to content himself with a feeble stroll in his garden;

and here one afternoon his foot got complicated with Shakespeare, and he rolled heavily over, and, in his downfall, Shakespeare was snapped in two. Jerome laboriously picked himself up, and, with a half of his staff in each hand, tottered back to the house. He met Matty in the entrance-hall.

'See, Matty,' he said, in a shaking voice, 'I have broken him.'

'Lor!' Matty exclaimed. 'But never you mind, sir; get another. I never liked him. He wasn't a steady man, not like Sir Walter. Sir Walter was the only one of 'em all that could describe a genteel female. Have a new one, with Sir Walter's head a-top—do.'

'Matty,' her master said, in hollow tones, 'I am sent for. My walking days are over.'

After this incident, Matty marked his every change with vigilance, which love itself could not have surpassed. The decline of his strength, the disappearance of his appetite, symptom after symptom she jotted down in her mind day after day. Matty was beginning to fear that she would not marry her master after all. At the best of times he was procrastinating. So far her broad hints and appalling ogles, her flatteries and her fondlings, had not brought him within measurable distance of a proposal; and Martha, whose instincts were truly practical, felt that she must at once take steps to secure for herself a provision in case her master should die before she could marry him. She had found out by this time that the will, of which he had told her, was not yet executed; but of the existence of the other draft-wills she had not the faintest suspicion. Her part in the preparation of the catastrophe which ensued was

decidedly a leading one; but little the selfish woman knew that she was using her wits to outwit herself.

It was the morning after that on which Sally made her fatal discovery. Martha, looking at her master as she cleared away breakfast, observed a particular pallor upon his cheek, which, to her experienced eyes, seemed an indication of impending illness. Something told Martha that no time was to be lost, and she immediately began:

'Lawyer's coming this morning, ain't he?'

The solicitor of Jerome Dawe conducted also the money affairs of the Golden Girls; and he had appointed this morning for the attestation of the trustee's signature to certain transfers.

'Yes, Matty,' her master replied feebly. 'He said twelve o'clock.'

'Settle your own affairs this morning, do,' she said coaxingly to her master. 'Get that will finished. You won't die an hour the sooner for having your affairs put to rights. It will be off our minds, you know. Think,' Matty said, annexing herself in anxiety to her master with no small ingenuity, 'think how it has been on our minds. Lor!' she cried out dramatically, 'hain't it been on our minds?'

'Well, well, Matty,' Jerome Dawe said, in the old dilatory style, 'we shall see what can be done.'

'To-day you mean, don't you?' Matty inquired eagerly. 'Let it be to-day.'

'Well, well, Matty,' he answered again, 'I won't say that it shall not be to-day.'

'Say it shall be to-day,' Matty persisted. She was fearful lest to-morrow might be too late. 'Promise me you will make your will to-day!'

'Very well, Matty,' he replied; 'I promise. I will make my will to-day.'

'There's a dear kind duck!' Matty exclaimed. 'Then all will be right, and we shall ha' nothing to bother ourselves about. You are kind to your old Matty; but she has been always kind to you—most when you wanted most. Perhaps when you are well and strong I do sometimes let a sharp word slip. But, as I have told you fifty hundred times before, that is only what Sir Walter says—

"O woman, in our hour of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please."

Matty made the quotation with an airiness which came of long practice; and then, short skirts, ankles, and all the rest, she skipped out of the room. Jerome Dawe sank back in his chair and murmured to himself, 'Cultivated woman, Matty—for her station!'

But he said it automatically, from mere habit, and he said it very faintly.

Hardly had Matty got out of the room before she came back again, as frolicsome as a lamb, with two letters in her hand. These she threw upon the table with a sulky face.

'There!' she exclaimed. 'Two on 'em! One from Mrs. Badger—she's a good woman, ain't she? And one from Mr. Ruddock—he's a good man, ain't he? My word! There's something in the wind, or you would not have a letter from each of 'em same day.'

This was exactly Jerome Dawe's opinion, and his fingers trembled as he opened Sally's envelope. The missive was short, emphatic, and like Sally. It simply told 'dear uncle Jerome' that she was coming over to see him that morning, on business which required immediate attention.

In consequence of the recent manoeuvres of Martha Spring,

Jerome Dawe's mind was now full of his last will and testament. Possessed as he was by a conviction that Sally Badger had been armed by Nature with occult and tremendous weapons for the subjugation of her species, he felt certain that she had somehow discovered that his will had never been executed. Mentally he saw Sally the Terrible enter his room; he felt her despotic eyes set upon him; he heard the awful voice. Poor old Jerome Dawe shuddered.

'She will ask me, "yes" or "no." There will be no beating about the bush with Sally. It will never do to try to throw dust in her eyes.'

Then mechanically, and still dwelling on the vision of Sally thus striding into his room like Alexander the Great hungry for worlds to conquer, Jerome opened Daniel Ruddock's letter with faltering fingers. This, too, was short and pregnant with unexpressed matters. Daniel must see his dear Jerome before one that day; and he was coming over by the first train after breakfast for a 'strictly private interview.'

'Matty has been blabbing,' Jerome said to himself. 'She has let something slip, and Sally has heard it, and Daniel has heard it, and they are both on the alert. Could anything be more uncomfortable?'

It has been repeatedly said that Jerome Dawe was a man of infirm purpose. In all the important junctures of life his conduct was the product of external circumstances, never of his own will. This imbecility had grown with his advancing age, especially during the last few months, and he was now scarcely master of his own acts. The three wills which he had long ago prepared were lying in a pigeon-hole of his desk, and one of these he resolved to execute this day;

but he had not the slightest idea which he would finally choose. Now he would leave all to Margaret Alexander and Sally Badger; now he reviewed the claims of Daniel and his wife, and thought he must name them as sole legatees; later on fear of Martha overcame him—for Martha, like many an old servant, was loved because she was feared. A feather falling in the scales of his librating resolution would now be enough to settle the matter; and there fell, not a feather, but a lump of lead, and the will was chosen and executed in less than five minutes. For more than an hour Jerome had sat with the solicitor of the Walsingham estate; the business of the trust was now finished; but still, under twenty childish pretexts, he kept the man of law dallying over the papers. Jerome knew it was a good opportunity for completing his will, qualified witnesses being at hand; but he could not bring himself to tell the lawyer that he was going to do so important a thing, and much less could he decide which of the three wills was to be signed and sealed and delivered as his act and deed.

While he was thus halting between three courses the impulse from without which he so sorely needed was supplied. The strokes of a most awful knock were heard at the front door: a knock which seemed to awaken echoes in the cellars below and to cause the very rafters of the attic to ring; a knock which made the man of law leap in his chair; a knock which brought Martha up flying from the kitchen with the velocity usually associated with fire or explosion; a knock which turned Jerome pallid, and sent him in trembling haste to his *escritoire*, when, without a second's hesitation, he drew forth the document which he had now irrevocably

chosen as his last will and testament.

The earlier history of this astounding knock will be found in chapter sixty-seven.

CHAPTER LXVII.

IN WHICH 'THE WISDOM OF MANY' IS FORCIBLY SHOWN TO BE THE FOLLY OF 'ONE.'

SALLY BADGER was broken-hearted. Still, as a valiant soldier will never surrender, but fight on, however hopelessly, till death ends all, so Sally, who had quite abandoned the hope of winning the Battle of Life, resolved to use her sword to the last. She determined to go straight to her uncle Jerome, and tell him how cruelly Daniel had treated her husband and herself. This would do no good; still, it was blow for blow. Sally set off by the train which left Tickenham at ten o'clock in the morning; and she had just taken her third-class ticket, when she saw Daniel Rud-dock sneak into the booking-office. Daniel looked abashed when he saw his victim and enemy, and something of the expression of a taken thief appeared in his face. He stammered out, 'Fine morning, Sally,' with a tolerable maintenance of his ordinary manner. But Sally was not going to dissemble even for a moment. She had flung away the last rag of pretence of friendship, and Daniel should know it. She flashed at him a look of rage and defiance, which somehow made the old usurer tremble; spoke not a word; and went her scornful way to the platform.

Daniel did not like this. For a crafty man like himself, warfare with Sally was dangerous. His wiliness supplied no weapon proper for defence against the blud-

geoning attack of which she was so terrible a mistress. A man may be a renowned snake-charmer, and yet feel nervous if called to deal with a mad bull; and an infallible mole-catcher may shudder at the tactics of a wild cat. Daniel had the Badgers in his grasp as tight as trickery and low ingenuity could make them; but still, when Sally gave him this daring slap, he trembled. At any cost she must be soothed! Daniel hurried up the steps after her, and wheezing with haste and excitement, shuffled to her side.

'How are you this morning, Sally?' he said, his villanous face puckered into a fawning smile. 'Cold for the time of year, ain't it? But let us be thankful it is dry.'

'At which end of the platform do you wish to remain?' Sally asked deliberately. Daniel thought she was going to talk things over.

'Here—here,' he replied, rubbing his hands. 'No place could be better.'

'I shall go to the other end,' Sally answered; and with another fearless and unconquerable flash she left the confounded usurer alone.

'Evil will come of this,' he muttered to himself. 'There is danger in Sally's eye.'

Half an hour brought the train to Tickenham. Daniel was travelling second class, and when approaching the town, he reasoned with himself after his own fashion concerning the object of Sally's expedition. She was going to see Jerome Dawe. She was going to lay an information against Daniel Ruddock. Of these two facts Daniel was perfectly sure, and he knew that, with a weak man like Jerome, the first word would be the most effective. He must see Jerome Dawe before Sally, with her fearful eloquence,

told the story of her wrongs. Now, Daniel felt certain that Sally Badger would not take a fly; but he debated with himself whether, considering the stakes for which he was playing, he would not be justified in an expenditure of half-a-crown, so as to secure a few minutes with Jerome before Sally could arrive. The few minutes Daniel resolved to secure; but he saw a way by which he could save his two shillings, and he hugged himself with delight.

At Middleborough Station, by crossing the line of rails and going over a siding, shrewd male passengers were able to make a wonderfully short cut into the town. Of course this short cut was verbally forbidden to the public, but by the judicious expenditure of twopence Daniel often managed to avail himself of it; and now he resolved to dart across the moment the train arrived, and cut out Sally, who would have to trudge round a long road, and over the bridge. Thus Daniel would outwit the enemy, and save his half-crown into the bargain!

Everything fell out as he desired. It was market-day, and the train was full, and he saw Sally in the extreme rear of a dense crowd of people, doomed, Daniel computed, to five minutes' delay. He sniggered as he pictured his Amazonian adversary butting and pushing in vain; and he laughed outright when, as he was stepping across the line, he cast another glance at Sally, and saw her vainly trying to make her way through the throng. The more Sally struggled the closer the farmers and farmers' wives held together. Sally was imprisoned. Daniel rejoiced. He would get a good ten minutes' start.

In that cheerful and thankful mood which good fortune fosters in noble minds, Daniel walked rapidly towards Jerome Dawe's house. He had arranged all he was to say; and felt satisfied that he could soon convince his old friend that Samuel Badger had never ceased to press for an opportunity of securing the land. Samuel's foolish letters, tied in a neat bundle, were in Daniel's pocket. Any letter in the bundle was sufficient to prove his point. So Daniel had no need to consider what he should say. He wanted the first word, indeed; but his case was ready made.

'Let me see,' Daniel said, cogitating as he walked, and falling into his favourite habit of calculation of money saved. 'The fly would have been two-and-sixpence. Two-and-sixpence saved is two-and-sixpence gained. No, by the way, from that I must deduct twopence, which I had to give to the signal-man for allowing me to cross the line. Twopence from two-and-six; balance in hand, two-and-four.'

'Two shillings and fourpence,' Daniel repeated to himself. 'What can be done with two shillings and fourpence?' (How Daniel delighted in this sort of self-examination!) 'Twice twelve is twenty-four, and four is twenty-eight. Twenty-eight pence is fourteen twopences. What can be done with fourteen twopences? Why, there are thirteen weeks in a quarter. What can be done with twopence a week for a whole quarter? I have it!' Daniel cried, exulting. 'The *Middleborough Guardian* is just twopence a week. Here is the cost of three months' news paid at a stroke; and twopence over to begin the new quarter! What an amount of reading, as you may say, for nothing! Take those newspapers, and spread 'em

out on the dining-room floor, and see the space they cover. All that printed matter for nothing! I declare I shall enjoy that paper more than ever I did in my life.

'Yes,' Daniel said, talking to himself, as if he were both master and scholar, 'never truer word was spoken. "Take care of the pence—ah, take care of the pence!" Pounds take care of themselves.'

Jerome Dawe's house was now in view; but the way lay uphill, and was rather steep. There was time enough and to spare, however, and Daniel calmly moved upwards. All at once he heard the sound of wheels. He turned, and saw a fly coming up the hill after him at a most unusual pace, the man whipping his horse as merciful men never do, unless for remuneration. Daniel turned to watch the vehicle pass, thinking of the foolish spendthrift inside who knew not how to take care of his pence.

Despair and horror! A whole sack of pence emptied on his head would not have astounded Daniel so much as the sight he now beheld. The foolish spendthrift was Sally Badger herself. Sally dealt him another defiant look, and went by at a prodigious pace, and Daniel nearly fell to the ground, staggered by the sudden rush of surprise and chagrin. Brave Sally Badger! She had only four shillings in her purse; but she had promised the driver three-and-sixpence if he would get her to Mr. Dawe's quickly. The driver was energetic. The horse had just breakfasted, and went in for the job like a conspirator. Daniel, choking and almost expiring with rage, saw the fly dash up the hill, and far above it stopped at Jerome's door. He saw Sally leap out, like Julius Cæsar upon the soil of Britain, or

like any other conqueror and compeller of men upon any other disputed ground. The next moment Sally knocked that very knock which made Jerome Dawe's cellars reverberate, and caused the rafters of his attics to shake, and moved Jerome himself until he trembled in his shoes. Down the slope, rat-tat, rat-tat-rat! that fearful summons sounded. It rattled into Daniel's ear like a musketry volley. Daniel felt as if it were a volley indeed, poured straight into his own craven heart.

'Take care of the pence,' Daniel. Pounds take care of themselves. Quite true; but not just in the sense you meant. Take care of twenty-eight pence, and sixty-thousand pounds will take care of themselves. But the sixty thousand pounds will take care never to go into your pocket. Grinder of the poor and saver of scraps, you have lost this morning, by your miserly craftiness, a larger fortune than you have hoarded during years of cruelty and sin.

For Jerome Dawe's door opened, and Daniel's last hope expired, as he saw Sally walk victoriously in.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

IN WHICH JEROME DAWE EXECUTES HIS WILL IN GREAT HASTE.

'No doubt of it,' Jerome Dawe said to himself, while the knock was still ringing in his ears; 'that must be Sally. What a temper she must be in! It will be perfectly fearful to have an interview with her.'

Here a bright and happy thought flashed upon him.

'Let me get the will signed before I see her!'

With this thought in his mind

he was about to speak to the man of law when Martha came to the door.

'Mrs. Badger is down-stairs,' she said, with a face of discomfiture. Poor Jerome Dawe noticed his housekeeper's look.

'Even Matty is afraid of her,' he said to himself.

Aloud he spoke to Matty:

'Tell Mrs. Badger I am engaged for a short time. Let her wait.'

Martha cast an eye at the precious document in her master's hands, and understood that he was going to complete it; so, quite satisfied, she went down-stairs, and delivered the message to Mrs. Badger. Sally was waiting with the impatience of a true warrior for Daniel's knock at the front door. She waited in vain. Daniel dared not face her, and he had walked on to his own house, deciding to call on Jerome after Sally's departure; so minute after minute ran by, until at last even in her distress Sally broke into a grim smile, as she thought how ignominiously the foe had slunk away.

Fully half an hour dragged on before Jerome Dawe rang his bell and summoned Martha to show the lawyer out. When she had performed this office, Matty, without going in to Mrs. Badger, flew up-stairs again, and, with a greediness which no prudence could repress, asked her master if 'it' was done.

'It is, Matty,' Jerome Dawe replied, pointing to his desk. 'Done—never to be undone.'

'The will is made, signed, finished, what d'ye call it?' persisted Matty, pushing to the main point with a noble disdain of the niceties of legal phraseology. 'Fit for use now, ain't it?'

'The will is signed, sealed, and delivered, Matty,' said Jerome. 'Legally completed.'

'That's what I wanted to know,' Matty replied, not having any very clear idea what these words implied. 'It's part of the law of the land, and all's off our minds. Now I'll show Mrs. Badger up.'

With a countenance which suddenly (and to Sally most inexplicably) sweetened, Martha entered the drawing-room, and apologised for the long delay, and led the way to Jerome's private room.

Jerome welcomed Sally with unusual warmth. He felt more at ease, and fonder of his niece, now that he had done justice to her even in this cowardly fashion. Sally, full charged with wrath, was just about to explode, when something in her uncle's face arrested her.

'Uncle,' she said kindly, and with genuine interest, 'how have you been?'

'Well, Sally,' he answered, in the old facing-both-ways manner, 'I cannot say that I have been well, but I cannot say I have been ill.'

'Very well, very well,' Sally said, in an odd impatient way. 'We can talk of your health presently. I have got something to say that must be said plainly, and at once.'

Jerome trembled.

'Sally,' cried he, raising his hand, 'before you speak of it let me tell you one thing. I have just— Is that door shut? Come here, close to me.'

Sally, wondering at all this, came to his side. He drew her head down, and whispered mysteriously in her ear:

'I have just made my will. You and Margaret are to have everything, in equal shares, except an annuity to Matty. But don't breathe a word of it—not a word—even to Margaret.'

Sally could not understand her uncle's intense fear of any listener, the news not being such a surprise to her as Jerome expected. But she was thankful to hear it, and the sight of her uncle's face, which seemed every moment more pallid, touched her not a little. A reaction came after her great anguish and excitement, and her eyes grew moist and her tone unsteady.

'Thank you, uncle,' she said, kissing him. 'You are really good, but you have always been kind to us when you were let alone. Both Margaret and myself will do our best to make you happy, I am sure.'

'Sally,' Jerome Dawe said feebly, 'I think—I think you will have to take care of me.'

Something in her uncle's look similar to that which, in the earlier part of the morning, had aroused the self forgetting interest of Matty, now attracted Sally's attention. There was a hesitation in his speech, a difficulty of articulation, which a practised medical man might have interpreted at once, and which appeared portentous even to the unprofessional Sally Badger. With all this woman's force and self-assertion she had her tender feelings, and, seeing her uncle weak and ill, she resolved to defer her story of Daniel's misdeeds at least until the afternoon.

Martha Spring, having taken the earliest opportunity of asking her master directly if he had completed his will, and being answered in the affirmative, was satisfied. She only knew of one such document, which was in her favour; and, assured of the success of her schemes, she now changed her whole policy. She saw that, even while speaking to her, Mr. Dawe exhibited signs of most singular weakness; his trembling hand,

bloodless face, and laborious utterance all seemed to portend a serious illness; and Matty, with considerable shrewdness, knowing that the work she wished was done, and not likely to be undone, reasoned with herself that henceforth her wisest course would be to manifest no suspicious fear of relatives. Accordingly she asked Mrs. Badger, on the ground of her master's singular and alarming state, to stay until the following day. Sally was amazed that Matty should make such a request, which was unlike all her past conduct; but she at once assented to the proposal. And here let it be recorded of this great and warlike woman that then and there she confessed to herself that perhaps in the past she had judged Martha Spring too severely, and that the housekeeper was not the designing person which she had been considered. This slip of mind is mentioned to comfort the ordinary reader, who, daunted by Sally's tremendous moral stature, may faint at the thought of imitating one who was framed not to show how we may escape and rise above human frailty, but rather that some are from their birth giants of strength, marvels of gift, pillars and monuments of character, but not models. Learn, doubting reader, that our Amazonian Sally was human and feminine too.

About an hour later Daniel Ruddock stole into his dear clever friend's room with such a smile upon his face of mingled servility and malice, and with such an oiliness in his croaking voice, and such suppleness in his high shoulders and long arms, that any observer could see he was made up for some extraordinary part. Surprise upon surprise was in store for the simple-minded man. Jerome Dawe showed no sign of

emotion respecting the great land transaction; here was surprise the first. Surprise the second came when he learned that Sally was not going back to Tickenham that night. Surprise the third—quite a bewildering surprise—followed when he heard that Matty had actually begged that Mrs. Badger might remain to take care of her master! Surprise the last—which confounded him and upset all his calculations and clever speeches—burst upon him when he ascertained, by a few side questions, that Sally had never mentioned the purchase of the land to her uncle at all!

'Something deep here,' Daniel said to himself—'something very deep here. Sally wants me to speak first. She thinks she will get an advantage if I speak first. Why she should think so, I cannot say; but it is plain she does, and therefore I will not speak first. Sally wishes me to lead from my strong suit, and it seems good play to lead from my strong suit; but just because Sally is prepared for this good play, why, I shall try some other, and bewilder Sally. Sally bewildered! He! he! he!'

Daniel sniggered and rubbed his hands together.

'Well, Daniel,' Jerome said, breaking in on this cheerful soliloquy with slow and halting speech, 'you seem in good spirits.'

'Spirits?—good spirits?' Daniel said briskly. 'If I show a sign of 'em, I deceive you very much. I am in very bad spirits, Jerome—down. Expenses are so heavy, and those children of ours require so much spent on them, that, upon my word, I begin to see an end of money, Jerome—I really begin to see an end of money.'

'Daniel,' Jerome said, regarding his friend with strange sleepy eyes, 'I have made my will to-

day—signed it, you know, and had it witnessed.

'What!' Daniel cried, with an eager dart of his head forward, 'had you not made it before? I thought you told me—'

'It was drawn up,' Jerome answered, with growing difficulty of articulation, 'drawn up; not—not signed.'

'What a man you are!' Daniel cried, trying to express gratitude in a voice harsher than a raven's croak; 'what a Noble Man you are!—a nobleman born!—one of Nature's noblemen, as the poet says. So you really have signed the will, Jerome? Attestation clause all correct? Proper witnesses, both present at the same time, eh? Of course, your lawyer would see all right. Nothing like professional superintendence in these cases, Jerome. Yes, as I said before, Nature's Noble Man. Thank you, Jerome, thank you a thousand times!'

'Don't thank me now,' the old man replied—at each word his faculties seemed to be receding—'wait until you hear the will read.'

He paused, and then, with a palsied movement of his head, motioning Daniel to come near him, he whispered,

'It is a secret.'

'Yes,' Daniel replied vivaciously, 'I know; I catch your meaning quite. Sally must know nothing; quite right too. Grasping woman, Sally; and Matty the same—graspers both. O, you need not be afraid of any blabbing on my part. I am one of those people that—that—' Daniel paused for a moment, and then bethought him of a phrase which he pronounced with great solemnity—'one of those people who do not let their left hand know what their right hand doeth. No getting a thing out of me if I don't

wish. Mum—close as an oyster. As for you, Jerome, I don't know what to call you'—Daniel rubbed one eye. 'You are as good as good; in fact, Jerome, you are one of the salt of the earth.'

He looked at the old man. Jerome was leaning forward towards him, and his lips were moving, but his voice was hardly audible. At last Daniel, listening in wonder and in something of alarm, heard him say,

'Id—iz—a—zee—gred.'

Daniel was still looking at him in doubt, and the last syllable was still struggling to rise from the old man's lips, as if it had been glued there, when Jerome himself fell heavily forward, and, rolling against Daniel, sank upon the floor, and lay without sound or motion.

Daniel knew in a moment that something very serious had happened. He was well acquainted with Jerome Dawe's abstemious habits, and was not likely to fancy that he had been drinking.

Daniel rushed to the bell, and pulled it with such violence that its peals were yet ringing when both Sally Badger and Matty hurried into the room.

Not many words were needed to explain what had happened. Jerome was in a fit! The nature of it, of course, the doctor must decide, and he was immediately sent for; but even while waiting for him, and while they were yet ignorant of the precise nature of the attack, each of the three judged privately that Jerome's race was run. Something in the face, interpreted by the science which common experience provides, declared that the hand of death was lying heavily upon the insensible old man.

Matty was afflicted even to tears. With many sobs and sighs she bent over her master's uncon-

scious form, and it was curious that Matty now took care to tell both Sally and Daniel that he had been the kindest and best of masters for many years; that his loss to her would be wholly irreparable; and that Jerome Dawe well knew that he and his service were worth more than gold and silver and precious stones to her. Nothing could make up to her for the loss of such a master; and that the master well knew, and had known for years.

These sentences, divided into clauses by successive spasms of weeping, were delivered by Matty with great effect, some parts being addressed to Mrs. Badger, others to Daniel Ruddock, and the pecuniary passages, in the excitement of the moment, to poor Jerome himself.

Daniel was more composed; but Daniel, too, was visibly moved. Daniel declared that, in all his life, he never knew such a faithful friend as Jerome Dawe. Never; that he would say for all men to hear. A friend, he affirmed, who would stand by a friend as long as life lasted—and longer, Daniel added, in a kind of Hibernian pathos, that had more logic in it than might have been supposed. What a blow this would be to Beatrice—and to Eugene! As to Daniel himself—if 'anything' *should* happen—what would he do? Even to think of it was crushing, for, as he had been saying but a few minutes before (little thinking!), Jerome was one of the salt of the earth. And there was very little salt left now.

'Well!' Sally Badger cried—all the time she had been bustling about, making Jerome's head more comfortable, loosening his shirt-collar, slightly raising his head, lowering his feet, undoing his shoe-laces, and in general acting

like a humane and common-sense woman—'my opinion is that we can talk about character to-morrow, or next week, if we want to. At present, I think a little hot water and mustard to the feet will be worth more to him than if we were to say enough fine things to fill a book!'

'Yes, Sally,' Daniel said, assuming the place of her friend in the excitement, 'you are perfectly right. But when the feelings are touched, the feelings will assert themselves. You cannot alter Nature, Sally.'

'No, that you can't,' remarked Matty. 'Them as says they can is brutes, that's what they are.' This with a vindictive glance at Mrs. Badger. 'To see him lying there, poor dear!'

'My good woman,' Sally Badger called out, in tones which no mortal could resist, 'do what you are bid! Get some hot water and some mustard. Daniel, are you good for nothing? Do see that something is done!'

With a grimace Matty dashed out of the room.

'Good woman, indeed!' she ejaculated furiously. 'And what may you be? Niece, eh? That's your name to-day, ain't it? And you order me about the house, do you? Wait, my lady, wait until—'

She was interrupted by Daniel, who followed her out upon the landing.

'Matty,' he said, like a peacemaker, 'it is best for you to obey Mrs. Badger—*now*. Get the hot water and the mustard. Not that it will be any use,' Daniel added piously. 'Mustard is not a miracle, and what we want now is a miracle, Matty.'

CHAPTER LXIX.

IN WHICH WORSHIPPERS ARE SEEN
REPEATING WITH UNFEIGNED
SINCERITY THE CREED OF THE
GOLDEN IMAGE.

AVARICE and generosity, humour and sorrow, health and sickness, how close these run together as the great fabric of life is woven from the threads of myriads of lives! A tick of the clock divides rapture from despair, the thinnest partition separates the house of feasting from the house of mourning. A single brick—a morsel of lath and plaster—is all that lies between the marriage banquet and the dying bed.

While the last steps of the hot race for Jerome Dawe's wealth were being run in Middleborough, very different scenes were following each other in sad succession at Tickenham. Violet was daily growing weaker. But so gentle was her decay, so painless were the days that now glided uneventfully by, so beautiful was her face, in which decline revealed greater delicacy of feature and a more touching expression of patience, so many tokens of higher life adorned her departure, that those around her forgot at times that she was dying at all.

Margaret Alexander saw in this early death-bed a religious spectacle such as she had often read about, but hitherto had never beheld. She was a zealot of the best sort, trained in a severe dogmatic school; and until she could hear Violet repeat certain phrases of pious conviction the good woman felt uneasy. But Violet, reclining with her whole soul upon Mrs. Alexander, soon learned to say all that was required; and from that time her good friend troubled her no more with formal questions, but dwelt

on the simplest matters of religious hope, cheering the dying girl with those supernatural prospects with which the Christian faith environs the dark realities of sorrow and death. The foreground of Violet's sick-chamber was filled, as we shall see, with figures of every day; but there hung around it this vision of unearthly hope which brightened a scene where otherwise all must have been melancholy and fading light.

It is the business of a storyteller to record the feelings and doings of men and women, not to moralise upon them. Mildred could not regard her sister's condition with anything but the profoundest grief. The whisper of Religion could not stay the anguish which desolated her soul. Mildred, indeed, composed herself when with Violet, and tried to be cheerful, but in secret her sorrow was unutterable. From infancy, Violet had been her charge; and bravely the girl had obeyed her mother's last injunction. Mildred, as she lay awake at night, would go over and over their lives together, and from their nursery days until now she could not recall one angry word, or one divided thought, between her sister and herself. Mildred was not what we call an amiable person; but the whole tenderness of her austere nature had been poured upon her little Violet. As for Violet, her temperament, vivacious, sympathetic, and affectionate, was love's own chosen soil. She was kind to everybody; she loved many people; she worshipped Mildred. The elder sister, with her outer crust of hardness, and her strong individuality, had all along formed a striking contrast to the plastic and animated character with which Providence had associated her. So

these girls, intertwined with each other, and supplementing each other, seemed one person, not two. Constantly together, talking over the same subjects, dealing with the same people, the two melted into each other. Where Violet was too impressive, Mildred imparted firmness to her conduct; and where Mildred would have been too stern, Violet would surely slip in some tender little word that softened her behaviour. There was thus a marriage of minds with these sisters; and Mildred felt that in losing Violet she would lose half of her own soul. The parting was a tearing of herself asunder.

Poor Golden Girls! Followed through their lives by admiration, flattery, trickery, covetousness, and all the dangerous train which track the steps of wealth and inexperience! At the same time envied, wondered at, called fortunate, happy girls of brilliant destiny! Little could their vast wealth do for them now. To have saved Violet, Mildred would gladly have cast into the sea all she had, to the last sovereign. And as for drooping Violet, what was poverty to her, or wealth either? Yet even at this moment the world went on, persistently staring at the Golden Girls from the golden point of view. Violet was to be pitied most of all, because she was leaving behind such a heap of gold, every yellow sovereign having a portion of joy and splendour lying potentially in its precious circle. As to Mildred, the world admitted it was a trial to lose her sister; but the world could not help remarking that Mildred, rich already, would be exactly twice as rich when her sister died. One hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds a-piece! That would make two hundred and fifty thousand pounds

for Mildred! O, miracle of money! Could any one be broken-hearted, or sick of life, who possessed two hundred and fifty thousand pounds? Mildred Walsingham would surely have for her consoler the safest and surest and most unerring sympathiser that ever wiped human tears away. So said the world — the wise world, the grand constituency of opinion, where we all have a vote, brothers and sisters too; the great Babylonian congregation, where every day of the week, amidst all manner of music, hosts and hosts fall down and worship the golden image which the great prince of this world has set up.

To Mildred the approaching event came nearer and nearer in the similitude of a lifelong heart-break. By an incalculable effort she kept a face of tranquillity with agony in her soul; but as even brave men are known to close their eyes when the instrument of their death comes in view, so Mildred, with all her fortitude, could not steadily anticipate Violet's decease and what must follow.

Yet even she clung to Mrs. Alexander. This was partly because Violet so loved her; more perhaps because Mildred felt an indefinable comfort in witnessing a victorious composure in the presence of death, although she could by no means share that composure herself.

'Believe me, Mildred,' this pious woman said, in her simple way, 'Violet's is the better part. She is going to heaven. It is well for those who are there.'

Mildred made no reply, except that she shook her head, as if to signify that the saying was too hard. And yet she liked to hear it said.

CHAPTER LXX.

IS IT SUNSET OR SUNRISE ?

MEANWHILE Violet grew more beautiful in character and even in face day by day. Whatever she felt concerning death, she said little; but all her words showed that death was full in her view, and all her thoughts were for others. She contrived to secure another interview with Sholto, which, though a short one, was long enough for her purpose. Between these unhappy lovers the interview and the disclosures of that memorable night had been kept a profound secret. Sholto, for utter grief, dared not to speak of his sorrow, and Violet, for reasons of her own, did not mention the matter to Mildred. Sholto came into her sick-room, as was supposed, for professional purposes; and she took his hand and set her eyes upon him with a look which, while it was a token of tenderness, yet silently intimated that, on the subject of subjects, nothing must be said. He obeyed her unspoken command. His reply was a look and a clasp of the hand, for he would not agitate her by a word of sorrow or passion, and this was their last good-bye. Violet put a little packet into his hand, saying gently,

'Open that, but not till after—'

And at the same moment her sick-nurse came back into the room. There was no longer an opportunity for speech, had either of them desired it, and the broken-hearted young fellow only took her hand and pressed it. She saw his lips quivering. He saw her gentle eyes grow dim as she gazed kindly at him, and in this modest way our two sorrowful lovers bade each other good-bye for ever.

Alas for these last good-byes !
How many are sighed out each

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day ! The saddest by the noblest hearts. I see the crowd before me now—lovers, husbands, wives, mothers, friends. O, bleak future ! O, weary days of labour with no heart in it ! O, wearier nights of weeping and watching, and arms spread out in vain ! Yet let us hope that all faithful souls—not least those who least credit it—will salute the departed again, and every broken 'Good-bye !' become 'All hail !' when the eternal morning dawns.

When Sholto was gone, Violet asked to be left alone for a while, and it was more than an hour before she rang her bell.

Mildred, who had been out when the young doctor called, flew up-stairs, and was surprised to see her sister's face. It was not calmness that made it so strangely beautiful, but a kind of shining look, as if there was in her soul a peace that was more than peace, a joyful acquiescence in the fate which seemed so dark to others, and a hope the secret of which was hidden in her own breast. In the few days that followed Mildred saw several expressions upon her sister's countenance—weariness, pain, affection, and once or twice a last gleam of her dear old sportiveness; but through all this shining tranquillity remained.

'Milly,' Violet said that afternoon, 'I feel so much better to-day. I have a fancy that I would like to see all our friends, just once more. Who are they ?'

Mildred told her the names, and she asked in her old childish way if she might see them all—even Mrs. Marmaduke, who had been very kind to her.

Victoria Sanctuary came first. Victoria was all in the flush of her first great joy, for life was opening before her like a path of primroses. All her troubles about

Bob were over. Mrs. Marmaduke, in her great hearted fashion, had vowed and declared that her privilege as Victoria's mother was that she should present her with a fortune! Victoria's heart was beating at a quick pace. Her eyes were bright. She found herself trilling out all sorts of bits of song at all odd times for no other reason than because she was happy. And occupied with herself, and scarcely realising Violet's state, she entered the room rather abruptly. All her flowing vivacity was checked in an instant by the sight of the pale dying face, and with a ready sympathy, not less genuine because it sprang forth suddenly, she went to Violet's side. She took her hand, but knew not what to say.

'It is kind of you to come,' Violet whispered; 'I wanted to say good-bye.'

Victoria, thinking how bleak and dreary she herself would feel if she were in Violet's place, could not restrain her tears. Violet stroked her hand as if she were the comforter.

'See, dear,' she said, pointing to a case which lay on the table, 'these are my amethysts; open and look.'

It was a superb set—necklace, tiara, bracelets, and earrings, mounted in gold and adorned with brilliants.

'These are for you,' Violet said. 'I wish you to have them, dear. You are going to have a long happy life, I hope. You will look nice in them.' She smiled, but made an uneasy movement as if in pain. 'And in years to come, when you are dressing in the evening, perhaps you will have a little daughter watching you. You can tell her who gave you these. It pleases me to think I shall not be quite forgotten.'

When the Major heard of this gift he was greatly delighted; but he cleared his throat with great emphasis, and made an ejaculation in which the spirit was something superior to the letter, and protested that they were not treating the sick girl as his old friend Plympton would, and that he thought Violet should not be allowed to sink into such depression.

'The girl ought to be cheered up,' he said, in his off-hand style. 'Let her think of living, not of dying. "Cheer 'em up," Plympton says, "to the last." And he *did* cheer up my friend FitzAdam, so that the man, after being given up and saying good-bye to everybody—most affectin' scene—suddenly got out of bed and rang for a ham-sandwich, and was down in his library in three days. Cheer the girl up, I say.'

Full of this well-intentioned notion, he stepped into the sick-room.

'An old man come to see you, my dear,' he said briskly, 'claiming a father's privilege—or indeed, I may say, a grandfather's.'

He took her wasted hand and kissed it, and Violet smiled so brightly, so sweetly, that for a moment she scarcely looked ill.

'My dear little creature,' the Major cried, with animation, 'this respectable Dr. Jubilee misunderstands your case. You have got run down. Without doubt the system is run down. That we may admit. But at the same time—why, child, just allow me to tell you a little circumstance which happened within my own recollection, and for the exact truth of which I can pledge you my word. There was young Gallo-way, just nineteen, six foot three—'

He stopped a moment and looked at Violet. A faint smile played over her lips, and she shook her head with an air of

conviction which was perfectly intelligible, and to which the Major replied as if it had been a spoken sentence,

'You think not, my dear?'

Again that faint smile and the quiet decisive shake of the head.

'In that case,' the Major said, dropping his anecdote, 'what can I say to you? What can I say to you?'

Violet looked at him with her serious eyes, but made no answer; and the influence which now streamed from her upon everybody touched the Major. He grew very grave, and his voice was soft.

'If you will take an old man's blessing,' he said, 'or if you will take an old sinner's blessing, God bless you, my little child!'

Mrs. Ruddock and her husband called that afternoon to inquire, and Mrs. Ruddock was asked to see Violet. As she walked home she was unusually silent, and Daniel remarked upon it.

'What's up, Bee?'

'I was thinking, Dan,' she replied, with a sick-of-life air, 'looking at that girl, I was thinking how readily she gives up what we work so hard to get.'

'Well, well, well,' Daniel said a little testily; 'she is a good girl. She is fit to go. She is making a blessed exchange of worlds.'

Now, out of every ten readers of this story, five at least will say that such a man as Daniel Ruddock never could make such a speech as this; and four more will consider me irreverent for recording it. But Daniel said just what is here set down; and what is more, to encourage my readers to explore human nature, I tell them that in a certain sense Daniel Ruddock meant what he said. But Beatrice was not his equal in this particular.

'There is something strange in

it, Dan,' she said, shaking her head. 'Both sides cannot be right.'

Mrs. Marmaduke also saw Violet. In this woman's nature there was something of the soldier, and she could have understood even Violet facing death composedly, because she would face death composedly herself. But the cheerfulness of the dying girl, her gentle trustfulness, fine worldly old Mrs. Marmaduke could not comprehend.

'Who is this, dear?' the old lady asked, seeing the portrait that stood on the table. 'Ah, I can guess!'

'It is mamma,' the sick girl replied. 'She died when I was such a little child; but she seems always with me now. I dream about her time after time.'

See how differently we are framed. Had Violet uttered one of those simple religious speeches which Margaret Alexander prized above rubies, Mrs. Marmaduke would scarcely have understood it. But that little touch of human life melted her. The thought of the mother dying in the far-off years, and her portrait now beside the dying daughter, called up so many thoughts, that Mrs. Marmaduke felt it better to say goodbye.

A little later Violet saw Dr. Jubilee, and Samuel Badger and Hector. To Hector she gave a diamond ring which belonged to her father; and to the Doctor and Mrs. Badger some other memorials; and so pathetic was the scene that even Samuel Badger left the room rubbing his eyes.

Last of all came Sally.

'O dear Mrs. Badger,' Violet said, 'what can I say to you? I have so little strength. You have been so kind to us both, and to me especially. I cannot remember one single word but kindness

ever since you took us to live with you.'

'Violet, my child!' said Sally. Then she broke off abruptly, and walked to the window, coming back again immediately, like the ancient Roman that she was, with a firm and even cheerful face. 'Don't speak of that now, darling.'

'Do let me!' Violet whispered, like a pleading child. 'Mildred and I have talked so much about it. And we want—we both want—to do something to mark your goodness to us both. Dear Mrs. Badger, don't be angry with me; and, to please me, do the last thing I ask you. I have left you five thousand pounds. Milly is as anxious you should have it as I am. Do take it, and think sometimes of the little girl you were such a friend to.'

Of all those who had visited that room none were so strong in the ruling of the spirit as Sally Badger, and none had such a struggle to appear unmoved. But Sally did not give way. She stooped and kissed Violet, saying, 'I will take it, darling;' and so she withdrew. After that, nobody saw Sally for full half an hour.

Thus all these people came round the dying girl one by one—Victoria, in the flush of youth and love; Major Sanctuary, in his eccentric mood; Beatrice Rud-dock, full of worldly schemes; Mrs. Marmaduke, with her somewhat stoic virtue; Dr. Jubilee, comical and cynical; Samuel Badger, soft and unimpressible; Hector, a good image of the modern student; Sally Badger, rugged and warlike. Every one left that room in secret or open tears. All left with softness and awe, and admiration and wonder, stirred in their breasts. All left with some blessed intimation of immortality.

That was Friday night. All Sunday Violet grew weaker, and in the evening, about sunset, she sank into a sleep. Mildred and Mrs. Alexander were with her, and the others had gone to church. She slept quite peacefully for about ten minutes, and, waking, asked, in a soft voice, where Milly was.

'Here, darling,' Mildred whispered, bending over her.

'I have had such a dream—O, such a sweet dream!' Violet murmured. 'I was in a room with the sea outside, and water, and sunshine, and hills far away, so white and grand! And I was a little child lying in a crib, and you were there, and mamma. It has made me feel so quiet.'

She closed her eyes, and seemed to sleep again. They saw the lights in the gallery of the church brighten up all at once. The evening was closing in, and they could barely see Violet's face, but her eyes were closed, and she was placid and still; and, while they sat silently, the organ began to play.

'Had we better close the window?' Mrs. Alexander whispered. 'The noise may disturb her.'

'I think not,' Mildred whispered back. 'She will not hear.'

Just as on the first Sunday evening the sisters spent in Tick-eham, the Evening Hymn was heard, and sweetly the voices and music came across through the dusky air. But still Violet lay with closed eyes, in perfect repose.

Then, as before, the clear rich soprano came ringing out, emerged from the accompanying voices,

'Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.'

'See,' Mildred cried, 'she is awakening! Violet, what is it?'

Violet's eyes were open. There

was a light in her face, a smile, a beam of joy, which, even in the dusk, they could see. She spread out her hands, as if in welcome, and almost seemed to rise.

'Mamma! Mamma! Mamma!'

She uttered the words in a voice

rising at each repetition to a higher note, as if in a rapture of surprise; then her hands fell down, and before the last lines of the hymn were sung, Mildred and Mrs. Alexander were alone with the dead.

(To be continued.)

METELLA'S TOMB.

'Every one knows that a wedding-trip to Italy is incomplete without a visit to Cecilia Metella's tomb, that colossal tower whose mute eloquence has told so many centuries how an old Roman loved and honoured the wife whom he had lost.'—*Somers*.

Mid crumbling tombs along the Appian Way
 You walked with me. And while the road we trod,
 Dreaming of vanished years, when Rome held sway
 And ruled all nations with an iron rod,
 Reigning, like Heaven, supreme, we saw at length,
 Lifting its head mid ruin's circling gloom
 In scorn of Time, and like a type of strength
 Never to be o'erthrown, Metella's Tomb!
 Great thoughts rushed o'er me as I saw that tower
 'Neath which a Roman laid his love to rest,
 And softly to myself I said, 'No power,
 No time, no tyrant, from the human breast—
 Not death itself—immortal love can sever.
 Yes, Rome is dead, but Love lives on for ever!'

T. WESTWOOD TEMPLE.

Rome, February 2nd, 1883.

THE ETHICS OF DINING.

BY THE PHILOSOPHER OF THE PAVEMENT.

DINNER may no doubt be regarded as the central action of the day. All sorts of relations—culinary, literary, political, ethical, and even poetical and metaphysical—cluster around the dinner-table. I propose also to have my short say on the subject, and chiefly in relation to the ethics of dining. It would never do to relegate this mighty and absorbing subject from the domains of imagination or of morals. I took up a book a few days ago—Sir Archibald Alison's *Autobiography*—and I observe that when that worthy historian was Sheriff of Lanarkshire there was nothing with which he was more impressed than with a dinner with the Lord Mayor. No event of the French Revolution seemed more worthy of commemoration than a dinner at the Mansion House. Thanks to the hospitality of different Lord Mayors, I have from time to time enjoyed this honour; and though my friends versed in such matters assure me that there are certain City companies whose festive boards exceed even the Mansion House in the quality of the waiting and the peculiar excellence of certain viands, still the Lord Mayor's hall is the very fortress of dining, and, in its piled-up historic plate, its antique magnificence, its countless associations, is rivalled only by St. George's Hall at Windsor Castle.

The plan of the dining-room, which they give to each guest at the Mansion House, is a very useful one. You see your name

and the names of all your neighbours, so that you can spot every one precisely. You are lucky if you sit next to some experienced diners, who can give you some useful hints and command the attentive homage of the waiters. I sat, on one occasion, next to a gentleman whose liver was evidently out of order, who told me that during the season he had to attend three or four grand dinners weekly. No wonder that he looked decidedly out of sorts. I once knew a Lord Mayor's chaplain, who at an early stage retired from the dining province of his business, and was glad to subside on a cold blade of mutton and pickles. Nearly all the guests, in a highly scientific spirit, were qualifying themselves to compare the merits of thick and clear soup, of calipash and calipee. It is one of the sights of London town to go to the places where they keep live turtles; you may see them almost in hundreds—in tanks, in cellars, and in passages; and you can only get from one place to another by walking upon their backs. Your best time for talking to your friends is while you are waiting, to fine music, for the arrival of the grandees, or when you slip away to the drawing-rooms for a cup of tea before the end of the speechifying. I do not wish to speak disrespectfully of the talk, which is good; only one speaker in three is all that can be heard, and it must also spoil a man's dinner to be called upon for a speech. The Mansion House din-

ners are very accessible, and ought to be seen once in a way by a true-born Briton. There are few things more picturesque than the ceremony of sending round the loving cup.

In Lady Bloomfield's work, *Reminiscences of Court and Diplomatic Life*—in her youth she was maid of honour to the Queen—we have accounts of Windsor festivities: 'The banquet last night was quite magnificent, and so well managed that every one was served as perfectly as if there had only been the usual number at dinner. The table reached from one end of St. George's Hall to the other, and was literally covered with gold plate and thousands of wax candles. An immense gold vessel, more like a bath than anything else, containing thirty dozen of wine, was filled with mulled claret. The collection of gold plate is valued at two millions of money.'

I need hardly say that eating and drinking have got their ethical side. It was one of the forcible sayings of Dr. Chalmers that Christianity taught a man how to handle his knife and fork. We all know the story of the man who chose his wife by the way in which she ate her cheese. She was in fault if she either ate or left the rind; but because she merely scraped it he thought she would prove a wise and prudent housewife. I knew of an old surgeon who used to form his estimate of people by the fact whether they took plain bread or bread-and-butter with their meat or bacon at breakfast. He was of opinion that bread-and-butter on the sandwich principle was highly luxurious, but that plain bread argued a good conscience and a fine natural appetite.

There was the head of a college who used to invite the undergraduates in rotation to breakfast,

and formed an estimate of their characters according to the breakfasts which they made. He liked to see the young fellows make a good hearty breakfast. If they did so, he thought they were honest hearty fellows, who were going on in the right way; but if they did not make a good breakfast, he suspected them of an undue devotion to cigars and ardent spirits. This was rather a rough-and-ready way of arriving at an estimate, but perhaps he was not far wrong in the result. In this connection I may speak of another college dignitary who used to invite the men to breakfast. He only invited one at a time, and the breakfast invariably consisted of an egg and a chop. 'Now, Mr. Jones,' he would say, 'suppose you take the egg, and I'll take the chop; or do you take the chop, and I will take the egg.' The immense breakfast-feeds of the University, which required a good deal of fluid to wash them down, were very properly rebuked by the sumptuary example of this worthy tutor.

There was a well-known picture in *Punch* of a worthy alderman who was unable to go to church, and who is represented as propped up on pillows in his bedroom while his wife reads the cookery-book to him. Without indorsing the precedent, it may be said that a great deal of good reading may be got out of the cookery-books. Brillat-Savarin is very interesting reading, so is a well-known book, *The Cook and the Doctor*, and I have especial delight in Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management*. There is a great deal of literature in this last, and it is especially strong in natural history, and there is a great variety of hints and notes which give an intellectual character to gastronomy. Most cookery-books are

written from an imaginative point of view, and assume an unlimited command of time, attendance, and material. We are reminded of the cook who told the master who objected to his bills, that he could reduce the essence of an ox to the contents of a small phial. Now that friend of the household, Mrs. Beeton, gives dinners which may rank as works of art, and are perfect pictures in their way; but she has strict regard to the economical conditions under which the British housewife has to act, and shows how the maximum effect may be produced from the minimum of cost, and so is peculiarly helpful towards the main design of this humble paper.

It is the privilege of civilised people to dine, and not merely to feed. But on matters of dining there is every variety and shade of opinion. Take, for instance, what we are oracularly told by the deipnosophists of the present day. They speak of the varieties of dishes, and the wine which best suits each dish. Thus chablis should go with oysters, sherry with soup, champagne with *entrée*, and so on. But we must never lose sight of a simplicity of dishes and wines with a certain generosity of tone. I have dined very wholesomely off oysters and pheasants alone; chablis and champagne, on such occasions, should be the only wines. My views are those of a truly great man, Mr. Walker, who wrote *The Original*. He very sensibly says that in most dinners you ought to have the game before the joint. Most people prefer game, and yet at many dinners the game is sent away often almost untouched. Mr. Walker urges the great requisites of novelty, simplicity, and taste. What, in the interests of society, is to be looked for is not the occasional banquet, but

the improvement of the average good dinner. Walker truly says that 'herrings and hashed mutton, to those who like them, are capable of affording as much enjoyment, when skilfully dressed, as rare and costly dishes.' The cooking does everything. We are told of a dinner where the guests were astonished at the immense variety of dishes, and were informed that they had eaten nothing but pork. Walker says that, instead of a formal invitation, he would send a friendly note to an intended guest as follows: 'Can you dine with me to-morrow? I shall have herrings, hashed mutton, and cranberry tart. My fishmonger sends me word herrings are just in perfection; and I have some delicious mutton, in hashing which I shall direct my cook to exercise all her art. I intend the party not to exceed six; and, observe, we shall sit down to table at half-past seven.' Many people think that the herring is the noblest fish that swims, and most wise people prefer mutton to any 'delicacies of the season.' There is a freshness and accuracy about Walker's views which give him a very high place among culinary writers. Among ladies he will be unusually popular. He writes very decidedly in favour of champagne, which should always be iced, or at least cool as cold spring water. For festive occasions he does not approve of still champagne. Still less would he countenance the modern heresy of allowing it to be decanted and put before a fire two hours. He thinks that society might be administered like medicine. He says: 'A party of pleasure, with a few agreeable female friends, might produce a turn in a long-standing disorder which nothing else could, and, being repeated at proper intervals, might effect a

permanent cure.' Some of Mr. Walker's suggestions have at length met general acceptance. He complained in his day, and, unhappily, the complaint is not obsolete, that set dinners are managed more with relation to the pageant than the repast, and enjoyment is sacrificed to style. No one need be afraid of simple food. There was a great duchess who said to a neighbour, 'When there's only my lord and I, we have always a dish of roast.' The story is well known of George IV. sending away a splendid dinner and dining off beans and bacon. The Duke of Wellington could dine very heartily on a mutton-chop, and, in fact, did not appreciate anything beyond it. There is a great nobleman who is careful to have a magnificent dinner every day, but he frequently dines off an apple, and, from his theory of health, wishes his own family to partake as slightly as possible of the good things outspread on the bounteous board. I was talking one day with a worthy Carthusian monk who dined habitually on an apple and biscuit. He explained to me that what people called hunger about seven o'clock was only a little acidity left by the noonday meal. Many experienced stagers, who study dietetic science, out of a big *menu* pick up a very little dinner, and complain, in fact, that they make a very poor dinner because there are only a few perfectly natural items. Of course a man ought to know how both to abound and to be in want; but I confess to a British prejudice in favour of heartily enjoying a good dinner.

We hear a great deal at the present day of the higher education of women; and it is a movement with which I have the greatest sympathy. Only there is moderation in all things; and

I do not like to see a girl lose her good looks by overstudy of Thucydides and metaphysics. I am afraid that the ladies' colleges at Oxford and Cambridge do not take up the subject of cooking for their charming undergraduates. For that we have to go to South Kensington. A lady was lately telling me her experiences there; and she was one who received a medal from the authorities. They also told her that she could earn a hundred and fifty a year either by giving lessons in cooking or by going out to cook. Her only work for the first two or three days was simply to clean pots and pans. From this point she rapidly advanced to the higher stages of refined cookery. It is very commonly said that every good wife ought to manage her husband's resources frugally by her knowledge of cookery; but I am afraid, by all I hear, that this knowledge is by no means so diffused as ought to be the case. Every lady ought to be able to go into her kitchen and tell her cook where she is doing wrong or extravagantly. The mothers of England, with all their zeal for intellectual advancement, ought to teach the wives of the future to provide good and cheap dinners for their husbands.

This is one of the good things of a girl going to spend some time in France, especially in provincial France. I do not mean simply to go to a convent or a finishing school, but to attain some knowledge of the economy of a French family. She should get an insight into French cookery and into French marketing. She should understand the mystery of the kitchen-range and of the charcoal fire. She should understand fish and joints, and furred and feathered game. She should know how to go out in the early morn-

ing to the markets, to buy things in their due season, when they are cheapest and best, and also to understand the proper way of cooking them. I think that there is no prettier sight in Paris than the Halles Centrales in the early hours, when the young mistresses and their maids are busy inspecting the heaped-up fish, the wondrous variety of vegetables, and all the heaped-up treasures of the market. As the sun grows hot perhaps they will turn in for a little shade and retirement into the noble church of St. Eustache, so often thronged by those who attend the markets.

Now, for a mere trifle, six or seven francs—wines, of course, not included—our young housekeeper will give a thoroughly French dinner for a family. Now, cannot this sort of thing be done in England? London has no such advantages as Paris, or the great towns, Lyons, Bordeaux, Nice, in the various markets distributed everywhere; but still there has been some little advance, and we may hope for more. Even as things now are, dinners of considerable variety may be furnished for no higher price than the great joints and immense puddings, which seem to make things dull and heavy for all the rest of the evening. You may have fish, soup, *entrée*, joint, salad, for no more money than you would pay for the enormous unmitigated joint. Still there are difficulties in the way which ought to be abated and met. I remember being at a country house with a literary man who had been airing some such ideas in a leading article in one of the daily papers. He showed it to the mistress of the house, who, being a thoughtful sort of person, read aloud some of it to the cook. 'La, mum,' said the cook, 'what old fool has

been writing that?' and she proceeded to explain to the mistress that perhaps the actual cost of provisions would not be any more, but she would be obliged to trouble her for the services of a couple of kitchen-maids, which would involve the expenditure of a hundred a year. Some little extra expense ought cheerfully to be accepted for the sake of lightening the *menu*. What should be done is that the young ladies should have more of a distinctive training, and, like their great-grandmothers, understand more of common things. What a pretty idea is that of Corisande's garden, in Disraeli's *Lothair*? and if they could only be induced to care as much for salads and vegetables as the Lady Corisande did for simples, that too would be a step in advance. Naturally, too, it is to the young ladies that we should look for the pleasant arrangement of flowers and perfumes, and each should be able to pass an examination—say, on the composition of a salad, or how to cook snipe and red mullet.

Probably the most healthy way of living is that of the lower middle class. Various moderate meals, distributed with punctuality throughout the day, seem to be best. There are various families where no luxury is eaten either at breakfast or tea; but there is a hot luncheon at two, and a big dinner at seven; so all the heavy eating is limited within six hours. The mind is weighed down at the same time as the body. The proper rule appears to be that each day should have its periods of meals, exercise, and society. There is, I think, a growing consensus among medical men that butchers' meat more than once a day is a mistake. People must be content to make up with fowl, game, and fish. A lot of young

ladies at one of the ladies' colleges went in resolutely for vegetarianism, but the experiment was considered a failure. There really seems to be substantial foundation for Agassiz's idea that fish, by reason of the phosphorus, is a brain food; and I expect that magazine writers and young ladies at the Universities will be thankful for any nutriment they can get for their brains.

There is no doubt that the habit of expense in the giving of dinners is a very serious matter, and goes far to check sociability, and to discourage the giving of dinners in a moderate and enjoyable way. There are some parts of the country where you can hardly give a dinner under a ten-pound note; and you may spend a fifty-pound note if you are ambitious of display, if you wish to have the sterlet, the boar's head, and the finest brands of wine. I knew a man who gave a public dinner which cost him more than a thousand pounds, an expenditure which, I believe, he never ceased to regret. In watering-places and small communities, the giving of extravagant dinners has both a painful and ludicrous side. The true theory of a dinner, when you invite people often and pleasantly to dine with you, is that the basis of the dinner is your own usual meal, with some additions that may be naturally and easily engrafted upon it. You may, on such an occasion, bring up some of the best wine in your cellar, or the game, fish, and fruit that may have come to hand. On such an occasion there is no objection to seeing how far you may tax the resources of your kitchen. As civilised beings, we should not only desire that our guests should enjoy their dinner, but that we ourselves should enjoy the society

of our guests. In the petty watering-places everything is done in contradistinction to this. From the moment that the fatal dinner is decided upon, everything is anxiety and unrest. The kitchen is in a confusion for days together with the making of jellies and rich dishes. The services of the local pastrycook are called into requisition. Perhaps the place is handed over bodily to strange attendants. Wine better than your own cellar affords, and fruit and flowers, must be had down from London, and your hostess is so nervous because they may not arrive in time. Vattel, the French cook at Chantilly, killed himself because the fish did not arrive in time—it was only an hour late. And the hostess is rapidly approximating to Vattel's state of mind. As for any quietude and enjoyment this is impossible for the poor lady, and her discomfort is reflected among all the members of her family. Here are the menservants lounging grandly. But we all know who they are. In London we cannot make quite sure, though we have our suspicions, while declining to make an affidavit to that effect, that such a waiter comes from a neighbouring tavern, while another is only a disguised greengrocer. But in Pedlington there is no disguise about it. All the dinner-giving families have the same two or three men. We gaze impassibly upon them, and they gaze impassibly upon us, as if we had never seen each other before; but it is all a sham and an invention. It is the little greengrocer from whom we have procured the extra vegetables; and the extra waiter, who really waits very well, is the man who can be spared just now, as the season is slack, from the Seaview Hotel. A maidservant

has been told off on the special duty of seeing that the magnificent creature does not get drunk, and it is considered a prosperous dinner if this anticipated event does not really take place. Then the dishes are handed round in glittering and needless profusion. The side dishes are hardly touched. One expensive article after another is useless. Very glad indeed are host and hostess when the banquet is over, and they have the happy conviction that they need not trouble themselves for many a long day about giving another. But that three hours' continuous feeding must certainly be a mistake. The true idea of recreation is altogether absent. This is not the kind of thing which has the best influence for ourselves, or our guests, or the young people.

The highest element in the dinner-party, after all, is not the dinner itself. The intellectual accessories of a good dinner-party, though they are somewhat despised at the present date, are, in the judgment of the wisest, the most important of all. And let not the wisest despise the science of the deipnosophist. A bright cheerful dinner-party is one of the most exhilarating of tonics. In his correspondence, Cicero thus remonstrates with a friend: 'I am very much concerned to hear you have given up going out to dinner, for it is depriving yourself of a great source of enjoyment and gratification. Then, again, I am afraid—for it is as well to speak honourably—lest you should unlearn certain old habits of yours, and forget to give your own little dinners. But, indeed, my good Pætus, I advise you, joking apart, to associate with good fellows and pleasant fellows, and men who are fond of you. There is nothing better

worth having in life—nothing that makes life more happy. See how I employ philosophy to reconcile you to dinner-parties. Take care of your health; and that you will best do by going out to dinner.' Pliny thought very highly of his own dinners. He gives us the *menu* of one, which was certainly light enough, fruit and vegetables largely preponderating. 'I give all my guests the same wine,' says Pliny, 'for when I ask them to dinner I look on my freedmen as my guests, and forget that they were once slaves. . . . You may have a more splendid and expensive dinner in many houses; there is not one in which you can dine with more cheerful accompaniments and feel yourself more at ease than in mine.'

The greatest men, even those who have been most indifferent about their own feeding, have shown themselves very conscious of the important place which feeding holds in society. A friend of Lord Macaulay's told me that he had often seen that great man sitting down to breakfast with an *Æschylus* in one hand and another learned book, or rather another requiring learning, in the other. In one of his letters to a pet little niece he tells her that she will find that books are 'better than all the tarts and cakes and toys and plays and sights in the world. If anybody would make me the greatest king that ever lived, with palaces and gardens and fine dinners, and wine and coaches and beautiful clothes, and hundreds of servants, on condition that I would not read books, I would not be a king. I would rather be a poor man in a garret with plenty of books than a king who did not love reading.' Macaulay ought to have belonged to a day which would have realised Plato's conception, when

kings should be philosophers, and philosophers be kings.

The literature of dining is, of course, of the most extensive character. Deipnosophy is a recognised science in itself, from Aulus Gellius to Dr. Kenealy. A great deal that is very good on this subject may be culled from the writings of the late Charles Lever, who often threw in little bits of wit and experience in the course of his fictions. 'I am speculative with the soup and grave with my *petit pâté*, reserved with the first *entrée*, playful over the asparagus and the peas, soothing with the *rôti*, and so descend into a soft and gentle sadness as the dessert appears.' He relished the Parisian supper, with its champagne and *calembours*, its lyrics and its lobster-salads, with ortolans, epigrams, seductive smiles, and marshino jelly. Con Cregan, in one of the raciest of his stories, discusses the combat between a man's taste and his exchequer. 'To feel that you have a soul for turkeys and truffles, and yet must descend to mashed potatoes and herrings; to know that a palate capable of appreciating a *salmi des perdreaux* must be condemned to the indignity of stock fish—what an indignity is that! You feel besides that such a meal is unrelieved by those suggestive excursions of fancy which a well-served table abounds in. With what discursive freedom does the imagination range from the little plate of oysters that preludes your soup to pearl-fishing and the coral-reefs, "with moonlight sleeping on the breaking surf"! And then your soup, be it turtle or mulligatawny, how associated is it with the West Indies or the East! bearing on its aromatic vapour thousands of speculative reflections about sugar and slavery, pepper-pots, straw-hats, piccanin-

nies, and the Bishop of Barbadoes; or the still grander themes of elephants, emeralds, and the Indus, with rajahs, tigers, punkahs, and the Punjaub; . . . dallying with the dessert to the orange groves of Zante or Sicily.' We need hardly remind the reader how Lord Lytton and Lord Beaconsfield have carefully developed the culinary element in their writings. Perhaps the novel-reader has observed the strong gastronomical element that is to be found in Lord Beaconsfield's stories. How he apostrophises soup, fish, and game: 'The warm and sunny flavour of brown soup, the mild and moonlight deliciousness of white. Ye soups, o'er whose creation I have watched like mothers o'er their sleeping child.' The whiting is 'the chicken of the ocean.' So of the ortolan: 'Sweet bird, all paradise opens! Let me die, eating ortolans to the sound of soft music.' 'Sherry has a pedigree as long as an Arab's; a bouquet like the breath of woman. A lobster has all the arts of a coquette.' So far my Lord Beaconsfield in the days of Lady Blessington, and when he might meet Louis Napoleon at *petites soupers*. He laid down that immortal principle which Mr. Bright quoted in the House of Commons—that the great secret of good dinners is to have hot plates. Disraeli had some curious remarks on the dinners of celebrated people. 'A dinner of wits is proverbially a palace of silence; and the envy and hatred which all literary men really feel for each other, especially when they are exchanging dedications of mutual affection, always insure in such assemblies the agreeable presence of a general feeling of painful constraint. If a good thing occurs to a guest, he will not express it, lest his neighbour, who is publish-

ing a novel in numbers, shall appropriate it next month, or he himself, who has the same responsibility of production, be deprived of its legitimate appearance.' The personal interest of this passage is that it is somewhat descriptive of Disraeli himself. For the most part he was a very quiet and observant diner-out, who, as a rule, talked very little, but when he did, talked a great deal. Sydney Smith always made a point of making a good meal before he brought out any of his good sayings. One of those who used to meet Disraeli says 'that his mouth was alive with a kind of working and impatient nervousness,' and then he would burst forth into a 'perfectly successful cataract of expression with a curl of triumphant scorn worthy of Mephistopheles.' In his riper days the great Earl eliminated the Mephistopheles expression, which would scarcely conduce to sociability, and was known as the most delightful of diners-out. It is curious that, so far from complaining of silence, Sir Archibald Alison, in his *Autobiography*, complains of the strain caused by the incessant conflict of the wits and their efforts to cut one another out.

Macaulay always took care that the young ones should have a good tuck out. Sometimes he teased them by giving them things which they could not appreciate, such as olives and caviare. In his diary he writes: 'Fanny brought George and Margaret, with Charley Cropper, to the Albany, at one yesterday. I gave them some dinner—fowl, ham, marrow-bones, tart, ice, olives, and champagne.' He says, 'I was Dando at a pastrycook's, and then at an oyster-shop.' We find him writing, 'Ellis came to dinner at seven. I gave him a lobster curry,

woodcock, and macaroni. I think I will note dinners as honest Pepys did.' He was very careful what he gave Mr. Ellis, probably, perhaps, for his friend's sake, and probably, perhaps, for his own. He invites his friend thus: "You will find a good bedroom, a great tub, a tolerably furnished bookcase, lovely walks, fine churches, a dozen of special sherry, half a dozen of special hock, and a tureen of turtle soup." I read this last paragraph to Hannah, who is writing at the table beside me. She exclaimed against the turtle: "Such gluttons men are!" "For shame," I said; "when a friend comes to see us we ought to kill the fatted calf." "Yes," said she, "but from the fatted calf you will only get mock turtle." When he invites his friend to Tunbridge Wells he promises him 'half a dozen of the best sherry and a dozen of good champagne, and Plato and Lucian.' When he invited his old Cambridge friends to breakfast he used to give them some of the Trinity audit ale. There was no document with which he was better acquainted than the *Almanach des Gourmands*. Mr. Trevelyan says that he would always be contented with a couple of eggs for breakfast, or the ordinary dinner of a seaside lodging-house. But he liked to give his friends a feast, and was never better pleased than when he saw them enjoying themselves. 'He generally selected, by a half-conscious preference, dishes of an established, and, if it so may be called, a historical, reputation. He was fond of testifying to his friendliness for Dissenters by treating his friends to a fillet of veal, which he maintained to be the recognised Sunday dinner in good old Nonconformist families. He liked still better to prove his loyalty to the Church

by observing her feasts. A Michaelmas Day on which he did not eat goose, or ate it in solitude, was no Michaelmas Day to him; and regularly on Christmas Eve there came to our house a cod-fish, a barrel of oysters, and a chine, accompanied by the heaviest turkey which diligence could discover and money could purchase. If he was entertaining a couple of schoolboys who could construe their fourth Satire of Juvenal, he would reward them for their proficiency with a dish of mullet that might have passed muster on the table of an augur or an emperor's freedman.'

Metternich in his *Memoirs* does not disdain to speak about dinners. He was an orthodox man, and did not at all approve that a Christmas dinner should have no recognition of Christmas. 'I have just come from Treilhard, who has given us his first dinner. We had very good cheer. I do not know who cooked it; be this as it may, it was very well appointed. Good wine and good cheer—see to what the religion of this regenerated nation is reduced! They know no other god than their stomach, and no other enjoyment but that of their senses. Doubtless this is Christmas Day, but they only know it as the 5th Nivose. I do not think that a single member of the French Embassy, either master or servant, has dreamt of attending mass. The dinner passed off very well; they talked much and ate much, this is the best I can say for it.' Dining again with Treilhard, he was vexed with seeing in the middle of the table a pyramid of enormous tricoloured flags. 'I declare I quite lost my appetite at the sight of those execrable colours: the dinner itself was very good.'

Bismarck always takes great

interest in his food. According to Bunsh, he mentioned the case of a young diplomatist at Vienna who 'had carefully collected all the *menus* of his chief, and preserved them in two finely-bound volumes, in which some most interesting combinations were to be found.' It is mentioned of Bismarck that he was very fond of fish; that he preferred lamprey to trout. This is another corroboration of Agassiz's idea that fish is a great feeder of brain. He would probably also indorse the opinion of Niemayer, the great German physician, that a doctor ought to be rather a gourmand; that he should give as much attention to diet and cooking as to physic. There is a certain statesmanlike utterance 'that all our thoughts may be concentrated on our plate, and our undivided attention bestowed on what we are eating.' There is also a diplomatic caution that a wise man should never seat himself near any large joint, 'unless you choose to incur the risk of being forced to waste your most precious moments in carving for others instead of for yourself.'

We have made a few notes on the curiosities of feeding. Some of them are very remarkable. It is said of Montezuma that he would have some dairy-fed baby, when this choice article happened to be in season. There is no more characteristically saturnine writing of Dean Swift's than the proposition that people should eat babies. He contended that such a practice would provide an excellent article of diet, and thin the population.

We are obliged to Dr. Garrod and other writers for these curious items: *Monkeys* are eaten by the Chinese and others. The flesh is said to be palatable. *Wolves* are forbidden among the African

Arabs, but are not unfrequently eaten by sick persons from the belief that their flesh is medicinal. Five thousand cats are said to have been eaten in Paris during the late siege. According to the same authority, the cat is down-right good eating. A young one, well cooked, is better than hare or rabbit. It tastes something like the American gray squirrel, but is even tenderer and sweeter. One thousand two hundred dogs, it is stated, were eaten in Paris during the late siege, and the flesh fetched from two to three francs per pound. According to Pliny, puppies were regarded as a great delicacy by the Roman gourmands. The bear supplies food to several nations of Europe, and its hams are considered excellent. The flesh of the brown or black bear, which is eaten by the common people of Norway, Russia, and Poland, is difficult of digestion, and is generally salted and dried before it is used. Two bears were eaten in Paris during the siege, and the flesh was supposed to taste like pig. The Indian tribes of the interior of Oregon eat bears. The *hedgehog* is considered a princely dish in Barbary, and is eaten in Spain and Germany. It is frequently eaten by the sick among the African Arabs from the belief that the flesh is medicinal. *Mice* and *rats* are eaten in Asia, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, and considered delicate morsels. The taste of rats is considered to be something like that of birds. The Chinese eat them, and to the Esquimaux epicures the mouse is a real *bonne bouche*. Rats and mice were eaten in Paris during the siege. The *porcupine* is reckoned delicious food in America and India, and resembles sucking-pig. The Dutch and the Hottentots are fond of it, and it is frequently brought to

table at the Cape of Good Hope. The *squirrel* is eaten by the natives of Australia, the North American Indians, and is a favourite dish in Sweden and Norway. The flesh is tender, and said to resemble that of a barn-door fowl. It is sometimes eaten by the lower classes in England and the United States, and is said to make excellent pies. The flesh of the *beaver* is much prized by the Indians and Canadian traders, especially when it has been roasted in the skin after the hair has been singed off. It is also used in South America, and said to be excellent eating. Catlin calculates that above two hundred and fifty thousand North American Indians subsist almost exclusively on the *buffalo* through every part of the year. The beef is tough, dark-coloured, and occasionally of a musky flavour. The *reindeer* is eaten in Siberia, and is the favourite food of the Esquimaux. It is the principal nourishment of the Laplanders. The flesh of the *horse* is eaten largely by various nations. The Indian horsemen of the Pampas live entirely on the flesh of their mares, and eat neither bread, fruit, nor vegetable. A Berlin newspaper states that there were at a certain date seven markets for horseflesh in that city, in which, during the first ten months of the year, there were one hundred and fifty horses slaughtered. A meeting was held in 1864 at the Acclimatisation Garden in Paris for the purpose of promoting the greater consumption of horseflesh as an article of food. In 1866 the first horse-butcher's shop was opened in Paris. Sixty-five thousand horses, it is asserted, were eaten in Paris during the siege, and the flesh was facetiously called 'siege venison.' On the 6th of February 1868 a memorable

'banquet hippophagique' was given at the Langham Hotel, under the auspices of Mr. Bicknell. According to Pliny, the Romans at one time ate the *ass*. The wild ass is still in much esteem among the Persians, who consider it as equal to venison. One thousand donkeys and two thousand mules are reported to have been eaten in Paris during the siege. The flesh of the latter is delicious, and far superior to beef; roast mule is, in fact, an exquisite dish. Ass's flesh forms the basis of the renowned sausages of Bologna. The *elephant* is eaten in Abyssinia and other parts of Africa, also in Sumatra. Some steaks that were cut off Chunees, the elephant that was shot at Exeter 'Change, on being cooked, were declared to be 'pleasant meat.' The three elephants that were eaten in Paris during the siege were pronounced a great success. The liver was considered finer than that of any goose or duck. Dr. Livingstone writes: 'We had the elephant's foot cooked for breakfast next morning, and found it delicious. It is a whitish mass, slightly gelatinous and sweet, like marrow. A long march, to prevent biliousness, is a wise precaution after a meal of elephant's foot. Elephant's trunk and tongue are also good, and, after long simmering, much resemble the hump of a buffalo and the tongue of an ox; but all the other meat is tough, and, from its peculiar flavour, only to be eaten by a hungry man.'

The hippopotamus that was killed and partly burnt in the fire at the Crystal Palace a few years back was eaten by Dr. Crisp and some of his friends, who reported that the flavour of the flesh was excellent, and its colour whiter than any veal. The *peafowl* is occasionally eaten, and its flesh is reputed to be good;

but the beauty of the peacock's plumage renders it too valuable a bird to form an ordinary article of food. In olden times the peacock occupied its place at the table as one of the dishes in the second course at every great feast. *Swans* were eaten by the ancients, and often appeared of old at great banquets in England. They are eaten by the natives of Australia; and the flesh of the cygnet, which is said to have a flavour resembling both the goose and the hare, is still considered a delicacy in Europe. Snakes are eaten by the Chinese, the natives of Australia, and by those of many other countries; but the flesh is reckoned unwholesome, and liable to occasion leprosy. A nutritious broth for invalids is made in some places from the flesh of the poisonous viper. The *rana esculenta* is highly prized in France for its hind-legs, which form the part eaten; and these may be seen sometimes skewered together in the windows of some of the provision establishments in Paris. Attempts have been made at different times to acclimatise the *rana esculenta* in England, and apparently with some success in Cambridgeshire, where, it is said, their very remarkable and sonorous croak has procured for them the name of the 'Cambridgeshire nightingales.' *Locusts* are eaten in great quantities, both fresh and salted. They have a strong vegetable taste, the flavour varying with the plants on which they feed. Dr. Livingstone considered them palatable when roasted. Humboldt, on his return from the Rio Negro, saw a tribe of Ottomacs who lived principally during the rainy season upon a fat unctuous clay which they found in their district. A kind of earth known as *bread-meal*, which consists, for the most part, of the

empty shells of minute infusoria animalcules, is still largely eaten in Northern Europe; and a similar substance, called *mountain meal*, has been used in Northern Germany in times of famine as a means of staying hunger.

All this may help to realise a wonderful picture drawn by Mr. Froude in one of his latest writings: 'Suddenly one of the walls of the court became transparent, and there appeared an interminable vista of creatures—creatures of all kinds from land and water—reaching away into the extreme distance. They were those which in the course of my life I had devoured, either in part or whole, to sustain my unconscionable carcass. There they stood in lines, with solemn and reproachful faces—oxen and calves, sheep and lambs, deer, hares, rabbits, turkeys, ducks, chickens, pheasants, grouse, and partridges, down to the larks and sparrows and black-birds which I had shot when a boy and made into puddings. Every one of them had come up to bear witness against their murderer. Out of sea and river had come the trout and salmon, the soles and turbot, the ling and cod, the whiting and mackerel, the smelts and whitebait, the oysters, the crabs, the lobsters, the shrimps. They seemed literally to be in millions; and I had eaten them all! I talked of wages. These had been my wages. At this enormous cost had my existence been maintained. A stag spoke for the rest: "We all," he said, "were sacrificed to keep this cormorant in being, and to enable him to produce the miserable bits of printed paper which are all that he has to show for himself. We know him only as the most cunning, the most destructive, and, unhappily, the longest-lived of all carnivorous

beasts. His delight is in killing. Even when his hunger is satisfied he kills us for his mere amusement." The oxen lowed approval, the sheep bleated, the birds screamed, the fishes flapped their tails.'

We are reminded of some curious lines in a once famous book, Anstey's *Bath Guide*, which gives an epitaph for *gourmand* or *gourmet*:

'Farewell! May the turf where thy cold
reliquies rest
Bear herbs, odoriferous herbs; o'er thy
breast
Their heads thyme and sage and pot
marjoram wave,
And fat be the gander that feeds on thy
grave!'

We need not discuss minutely the ethics of our subject, which indeed lie on the surface, and have accompanied us all along. Eating and drinking are things totally indifferent, and can only acquire any moral quality by the relations that belong to them. We have no quarrel with the hearty appetites of young men; but we know sad stories of ruinous bills run up at the college cook's and at the regimental mess-table. These are not the worst accounts run up. The philosophy of the matter lies still deeper. The great principles of feeding require moderation and even abstemiousness. We do not discuss the theology of a Friday's fast; but the habit of fasting one day in seven, at least to the extent of lessening and simplifying our diet, and especially in warm countries, appears to be conducive to health and longevity. No doubt we all of us eat and drink more than we need. The teetotallers have their crusade against our drinking, but surely some similar organisation is required against over-eating. It may be said of many a man that he digs his grave with his teeth. The experience of most

medical men is that an overwhelming proportion of disease arises from errors in diet. The first thing which the doctor has to do is to limit, weigh, and select the patient's diet. Perhaps the patient rebels. Like the Northern Farmer, he must have his glass of yaille. Said a countryman one day, 'I takes all the things I likes, and let them fight it out among themselves.' But this cannot be done with impunity. Nature makes the dullest comprehend her teachings. At first she speaks in a gentle whisper, and presently in a voice of thunder. At first it is very irksome and wearisome to fret and fight under a lot of arbitrary rules. But we find that, like better men, we must go into training. And by and by we may have to find it makes an intellectual amusement, so to speak, to be playing at chess with gout or dyspepsia, or Bright's disease, or *angina pectoris*. For

all these perils lie invidiously in wait for those who dine 'not wisely, but too well.' A man who lives moderately, in point of fact, gets better dinners, and gets them for a longer time. He finds out that there is an æstheticism in these things. Better even to live long on mutton-chops and toast-and-water than to be ill on viands and liquors that transcend the natural strength. It is as well to live with as much refinement and good taste as possible, but even the wise heathen could tell us that we should not 'live to eat, but eat to live.' St. Paul has branded a very unpleasant word on the Cretans of his day, which may be seen on referring to it, which would probably suit many other localities besides Crete. All these things are emphatically those that perish in the using: 'meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both them and it.'

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

By MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

'HOW MUCH ARE YOU SORRY?'

PURPOSELY Mr. Fife deferred keeping his appointment on the Wednesday, when Mr. Gayre was to give a final answer, till the last possible moment.

'I thought you had perhaps changed your mind, and were not coming,' said the banker.

'It seemed to me only fair to give you as long a time as possible,' answered Mr. Fife; 'although when a man fails to make up his mind at first I generally notice he experiences considerable difficulty in making it up at last. Well, how is it to be?'

'I have decided to go on with the matter.'

'Come, that is more to the point. Have you spoken to Miss Drummond?'

'Not yet.'

'When will you do so?'

'I cannot tell; probably not until I am able to say, "Mr. Dane has been proved innocent. He will be at liberty in a few days."'

'Good Heavens!' ejaculated Mr. Fife; 'is this Bedlam, and are you one of the patients?'

'I should be mad indeed, Mr. Fife, if I pursued any other course.'

'It does not make much difference to me. I suppose you know your own business best; but I confess I was not prepared to find Mr. Nicholas Gayre, of the sign of the Tortoise, Lombard Street,

so romantic a gentleman. All that remains now for you to do in the way of self-renunciation and chivalry is to give the bride away, take Dane into partnership, and entreat both husband and wife always to regard you as a devoted friend. They won't know how to express their gratitude sufficiently for a while, and then they'll begin to say, "How intolerable it is to have a stranger coming in and out at all hours! He takes good care we shall never forget that kindness he did us." Or else Mr. and Mrs. Dane will begin to wrangle about you. He will observe he should have preferred to work out his time rather than lie under an eternal obligation; and she will remark, she wishes he had never been let out of prison.'

Mr. Gayre looked across at his tormentor, but spoke no word—indeed, he had no word ready to speak.

'When are you going to Colvend?' asked Mr. Fife.

'I have not made up my mind.'

'O!' and Mr. Fife laughed ironically.

'May I ask what you mean by your extremely offensive manner?' inquired Mr. Gayre.

'Not much, but enough,' was the calm reply. 'When do you suppose you will make up your mind? There is no time to be lost, you know.'

'I do not mean to be dictated to by you,' declared Mr. Gayre, trembling with passion.

'Pardon me, I fancy I must dictate to you a very little. Just give me an idea, will you, as to the outside time within which it may suit your convenience to open proceedings?'

'If it is money you want—'

'I want money; but I can do without it for a short period. And now, as you can't, or won't, give a straightforward answer to a plain question, listen to me. I am not going to wait your convenience. A wrong has been done, and it must be righted,' added Mr. Fife, with a nasty jeer. 'That nice young man ought to be set upon his pedestal again. He needs comfort; and we know who will console him. It really is a shame that an innocent person should remain under such a cloud merely because you are unable to decide what you will do.'

'I quite agree with you, and you had better see Mr. Colvend yourself.'

'Softly—softly; it is Miss Drummond I shall see first.'

'See Miss Drummond, then.'

'But I thought you were going to spare her the crowning humiliation of an interview with my unworthy self.'

'I meant to do so; but as you cannot refrain from insolence when addressing me, I feel it impossible to carry negotiations further with you.'

'The insolence, as you call it, has, I fancy, been more on your side than mine. I came here to do you a good turn, and at the same time benefit myself. How was I received? And now, when all I want is some definite answer from you as to the length of time you purpose to wait before seeing Mr. Colvend, you turn round and advise me to go to my principals, or Miss Drummond, or anybody likely to make a beautiful mess of

the whole business, in preference to yourself, who have posed as Oliver Dane's best friend. Friend, indeed! If you could keep him in penal servitude for life, I believe you would do it.'

'For Heaven's sake take the matter into your hands, and leave me in peace! I will still stand to what I said as regards money, but I should prefer, in other respects, to be out of the business.'

'Meaning, I presume, you would rather some other person hung you than put the noose round your own neck and kick the stool away.'

It was really appalling! Mental analysis, the comprehension of hidden motives, knowledge of the weakness and wickedness of human nature, Mr. Gayre had always previously considered mere matters appertaining to the higher culture. He felt shocked to find a low fellow like Mr. Fife—a man he would not have shaken hands with on any consideration—a hum-drum routine creature as he seemed on the business treadmill, could lay his hand with unerring certainty on the festering sore, and by the aid of instinct, or some equally unaccountable natural gift, jump to the comprehension of motives understood but dimly even by the person they influenced.

It is a shock to any one who thinks he is acquainted with the world to find his knowledge is of the narrowest description, and Mr. Fife's remark affected Mr. Gayre like a cold douche.

'I fear I scarcely follow you,' he said.

'O yes, you do,' was the uncompromising retort. 'In your class of life your remark is merely, I suppose, a polite hint for me to amend or retract my words; but it is only because I remember my rank is not yours I have refrained

from using plainer and stronger language. By appointment—your own appointment, remember—I came here to-night, as I understood, finally to arrange details: and first you tell me what I knew before, that you had decided to go on with the matter; and second, because something I say does not quite please your mightiness, that I had better go through with it myself. The whole fact is you want to “trim,” and you do not exactly see how to do it. You do not like to tell Miss Drummond her lover is innocent, and trust to her generosity, because you know as well as I do women have no generosity, and no gratitude either, if you come to that. You are averse to going to Colvend because you feel the first sentence you speak will put the girl beyond your reach for ever; and you do object to adopt the plan I suggested because you desire to keep up the character of being something more than human. That is how the case stands, and accordingly you wish to drift for a bit, to see if anything turns up. The captain in the old song “Told them he would marry, but he never said when;” and in like manner you may keep on “intending” to go to Colvend’s till the Millennium, or till Oliver Dane’s sentence has nearly expired.’

‘If you have quite finished, Mr. Fife, perhaps you will kindly return me the paper I was foolish enough to sign, and leave my house.’

‘As to leaving, I shall go in a minute; as to giving up the paper, I’m not such a flat. As to the rest—this is Wednesday—if by Saturday you have not spoken to Mr. Colvend, I shall take the liberty of asking a private audience with your young lady on Sunday.’

‘Why delay? Why not tell

her all you know—if you do know anything—to-morrow?’

‘I said before, I had my reasons. I say again, I have my reasons; but even they won’t allow me to postpone action indefinitely. Oliver Dane is ill; next we hear of him he may be dying. If he should die—and he is just the sort of chap to break his proud heart—what becomes of both of us then? You would have to whistle for your young wife a long time before you would get her, I am afraid; and I should have to whistle for my money, and something else—’

‘How do you know that Dane is ill?’

‘What does that matter? I know as all men who are their own detectives always do know. Yes; and if you had not been so confoundedly high and mighty with me, I could tell you something else it might be your interest to hear. As matters stand, I mean to keep my information to myself for the present.’

‘Believe me, I would rather remain in ignorance for ever than be enlightened by you.’

‘That is courtesy, I suppose, and good breeding, and all the rest of it. However, he laughs best who laughs last. Now I am going. Saturday, remember, is the latest, and I shall not come here again. Good-night, Mr. Gayre. You think yourself a very wise man; I will not shock your refined nerves by telling you my opinion on that point.’

He was gone. As he closed the library door with a bang, Mr. Gayre understood the Dane complication had entered on a new phase. After ninety-six hours it could be no longer in his power to speak or to refrain. That halting steed, himself, would—unless he made good use of the short time still at his disposal

—be altogether out of the running.

There might be racing hot and swift—hope, despair, falsehood, asseveration, exultation, disappointment; but his share in the excitement, the rush, the prize, would be nil. Not even as a friend might he hope to participate in the gladness of the day of triumph, for he understood perfectly that if he failed before night on that fatal Saturday to decide, nothing but renunciation was possible. Mr. Fife, in telling the story, would make Susan clearly understand how he had halted between good and evil, and failed to do what was right, though he lacked courage actually to commit a wrong.

‘Yes; that is the way this brute’—so he mentally styled Mr. Fife—‘would put the case.’ After all there is but a right, there is but a wrong; and would Mr. Fife have been totally inaccurate in describing the banker’s conduct as cowardly? Perhaps the courage or the temperament which enables a man to plunge headlong into sin may upon occasion give him strength to perform some sort of enormous self-abnegation—sacrifice his own life to save some other life to all appearance perfectly worthless, smilingly wave farewell to happiness for the sake of one who, to our poor human thought, does not deserve to be especially happy.

It is a great mystery. The tendency of our modern life is to wipe all strong emotions, all supreme passions, off the society slate; and yet in a book it has of late become somewhat bad form to study, but which will survive, as it has survived, many changes of fashion and creeds of morals, we are specially warned against being neither hot nor cold.

Perhaps as Mr. Fife beheld

the face of that devil which skulks within the heart of every man and woman, he felt it might have been better had he chanced to be weaned on some different creed than one ignoring our humanity and the temptations which assail it.

Seven times were the walls of Jericho compassed ere they fell; but at sound of the final trumpet Jericho was an entrenched city no longer, because its foundations were rotten and accursed. If a tree have no root, how can it produce leaf and bud and fruit? The earth, which is gracious even to its meanest child, may give it for a short time some poor show of vitality and greenness, but it is not strong enough to suck a sap which shall support even during the few short days of spring-time; and so it withers away, and is cut down, because it ‘cumbereth the ground.’

In the day of his trial, Mr. Gayre found himself wanting; in the hour when he should have been strong to bring forth the best fruit of a man’s life, he was barren. Now, he knew it is not enough to decide that we will resist temptation—we should flee it. Those who are wise will not let even its shadow fall across their path.

If that night—that first night—he had allowed his better angel to have her way, and lead him through storm and darkness to a land of safety, whence he never could return to the wave-beaten rock where he sat so long considering, this terrible struggle need never have rent his bosom; but now he could not with his own hand sign the death-warrant—with his own lips he could not speak the words which should give to Oliver Dane his liberty, to Susan Drummond her lover.

He could have done great things

for Susan—he could have died for her; but it seemed absolutely impossible he could live without her. He had allowed the grandest opportunity of his life to slip by. What she would have thought of him! How she would have loved him! And now he had lost all chance even of gratitude.

Mr. Fife would open the ball; and some day, no doubt, tell Susan and the world how he offered Mr. Gayre the choice of being first spokesman, and how that gentleman refused to speak. He might come to be a common jeer, a mere laughing-stock. Mr. Gayre rose in a fury and paced his room. He had still time left. It was still not quite the eleventh hour, though near it. Thursday was gone. Friday wanted but few hours of being garnered into the great eternity. Should he still go to Susan? No; he felt the task beyond his strength. She should be led to meet her lover, but not by him; the delicate rose-tints should once again blossom on her cheek; but when that lovely portrait of tender happiness—of perfect happiness—was finished, another artist than Nicholas Gayre would add after his name the word ‘pinxit.’

No, he could not do it. He might that first night, in the mad rush and hurry of his soul, have battled through the wind and the rain, and, drenched and buffeted, told her all the story: how he had loved, how he had been tempted, how he had resisted, how he had come to bring her peace; and then once again taking his lonely life in his hand, passed out into the darkness, away from her for ever. Desolate though such an ending of the sweet love-dream might seem, it would have been a thousand times better than the wreck of honour and honesty suggested by Mr. Fife, than the absolute

cowardice of the middle course he was then treading. Was this what years of idleness and prosperity had done for him?—years of sleeping soft and eating regularly, of conforming to the world’s code of conventional propriety, of holding aloof from sinners, and consorting only with those who had balances at their bankers’, and were mighty reputable and respectable men and women?

Yes, it *was* this. Ever since he had left the army, and striven to shape the pattern of his life to that of those amongst whom his lot was cast, he knew each day, as it came and went, found and left him more and more truly a Pharisee thanking God for something which probably was not in the least degree pleasing to the Almighty. He had grown to like and respect money—or at least the things money can buy; the deadly canker of riches and conventionality had eaten into his very soul, and gnawed away the graces of impulsive generosity and noble chivalry which once undoubtedly were rooted there. He was not the same man. Yon poor publican, who durst not as much as lift his eyes to heaven, would go down to his house justified, rather than Nicholas Gayre, banker, who would gladly have given all he possessed in exchange for strength to do an act of the most ordinary justice. But he could not do it. Just as a drunkard will drain some fiery draught to the last drop, even while loathing the smell and detesting the taste, so this man, whose breath had once come shorter when hearing of great deeds, while recalling wild achievements, lacked courage to cut the rope binding him to the thought of wrong, though honour lay in doing so, and shame abode in that from which he refused to cast himself adrift.

'To-morrow will end it all,' he thought, looking forward as a criminal on the eve of execution may think of the following morn when he shall have been hours in eternity.

He would not lift a finger to retard or to expedite events. It seemed to him as though during the course of six days and nights he had lived a lifetime, and he knew at the end of that time one thing he had never known before—namely, that passive resistance is no victory, that a man may lose far more in the course of even a short siege than during a battle.

The library clock first chimed the quarters and then struck nine. But three hours, and then midnight. Mr. Gayre stood still in the centre of the apartment. It was not yet too late; should he go even then?

Irresolutely he turned towards the door, and took a hesitating step in the direction of honour and safety; then—

'Sir Geoffrey Chelston and a lady are in the drawing-room, Colonel. Sir Geoffrey would like to see you immediately.'

Mr. Gayre stared at the man.

'Lady?' he repeated. 'What lady? Miss Chelston?'

'No, Colonel, not Miss Chelston.'

'Good Heavens, perhaps the Baronet has got hold of Miss Colvend!' was the idea that fled across Mr. Gayre's mind. 'What a lunatic I am!' he next decided; 'the world contains a few other people and things besides Oliver Dane and his interests.'

He went slowly up-stairs; for the second time, as it seemed, Fate had interposed between him and his purpose. He was making yet another most reluctant move towards the right when the mysterious shadow we may feel,

but can never see, laid her hand upon and held him back.

Harlequin-like assuming the gay presence of Sir Geoffrey Chelston too! Mr. Gayre almost smiled as he stood on the landing, considering the remarkable shape it had pleased his deterrent angel to assume. A man possessed by the almost sardonic sense of humour nature (or circumstance) had given him ought to have been able to steer clear of moral pitfalls. But we are all imperfect; and, in his hour of need, Mr. Gayre certainly found his sense of humour a mere snare and pitfall.

It had not delivered him from temptation; it had not proved that friend in need which is the friend indeed; quite the contrary. Now the Philistines were on him in reality, his perception of the ridiculous—which had so often come to the rescue when, as regards mercantile non-success, envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness might otherwise have taken possession of his heart—left him with the power to gibe indeed, but the inability to fight. He could see the absurdity of forty-five thinking of mating with twenty-one; but he could not give up his fancy for all that. Susan was none the less fair because the summers of her life had been so few; he was all the more in love for the very reason that he had heard so often the joyous rustling made by Nature when the first touch of spring sunshine awakes her from long winter sleep.

No; it was as well Sir Geoffrey had come. For almost the first time in his life Mr. Gayre felt glad to know the Baronet was close at hand.

He opened the drawing-room door and entered. In the centre of the apartment directly under the chandelier stood the once

owner of Chelston; his legs, as usual, a little bowed; his white hat held in his left hand, ornamented by a broad mourning band; his whole unique person serving unintentionally to screen a lady who sat in an armchair close behind with averted face buried in her hands.

'How do, Gayre?' It was the Baronet who spoke. 'Knew you'd forgive me. I've brought a poor little broken-hearted soul to you for comfort. I said, "If Gayre can't help you nobody can. Never met with such a fellow for helping other people." Susan, Susan, my girl, look up; don't go on crying like that! Here's Gayre. Lord bless you, he'll see some way out of the trouble.' And Sir Geoffrey, who was not given to the melting mood, broke off with a very suspicious tremor in his voice, merely to add next moment, 'For God's sake, Gayre, think what we can do! I'd take a petition to the Queen myself, only I'm afraid she wouldn't read it!'

'What has happened? what is the matter?' asked Mr. Gayre, feeling totally stunned, by the turn affairs had unexpectedly taken.

'There, Susan; there, my dear! What did Papa Geoff tell you? Your own old Papa Geoff'; and the engaging Baronet stroked his favourite down as if she had been a horse. Mr. Gayre forgave him, though; the wretched sinner's genuine love for so pure a creature covered—in his brother-in-law's eyes—a multitude of faults. 'Didn't I say to you as we came along, "Beyond all things, Gayre is practical; he has always his wits about him; he'll make something out of this bother! There's a silver lining, you know; and gad! if there's any silver to be got, Gayre's the man to get it!"'

Having concluded which com-

plimentary speech, Sir Geoffrey reined in, and left either jockey who pleased to do the rest of the running.

'Miss Drummond, what is the matter?' asked Mr. Gayre.

He had walked across the room, and was standing close beside her; so when, for answer, she held out a piece of folded paper, he could take it from her hand without the intervention of Sir Geoffrey.

'Do you wish me to read this?' he said.

Just for a second she turned towards him a tear-stained face, out of which all the beauty had temporarily been washed by vehement weeping, and murmured,

'Yes.'

'I had no notion of it. It was the last thing I should have thought of, 'pon my soul it was,' murmured Sir Geoffrey, in a stage aside. It was the last thing also Mr. Gayre could have thought of, and yet the most natural in the world. Finding he made no move, already Mr. Fife had commenced to open the ground for himself.

Thus ran the note, which had neither prefix nor signature:

'Oliver Dane is very ill; removed to infirmary. If his friends mean to come forward, they must do so NOW OR NEVER.'

After he had read, Mr. Gayre stood silent, clutching the paper in his hand. At last he thoroughly realised the position. Oliver Dane, innocent, buried as a felon; Susan broken-hearted—Susan removed as far from him as heaven itself. Another man, and that man Samuel Fife, would step in, and perhaps even too late to undo the evil intensified by Mr. Gayre's want of decision. But what could he or Susan, or any one who lacked money and influence, effect without tedious and possibly fatal delay? No; it should not be. Mr. Fife's action

determined him ; all hesitation was over. One surging wave removed in an instant all the landmarks of his life. Good and evil, right and wrong, meant nothing to him then. He would save the man, but he must sacrifice the woman. With his own vacillation he had destroyed the will to choose. Only a single word escaped him at that crisis, 'God !' but it was no cry for help, only an utterance of despair as he turned him to the darksome way that leadeth to destruction.

There ensued a silence which, though brief, seemed to Susan endless. Twice Mr. Gayre tried to speak, and twice his parched lips refused their office ; but at last he managed to say, in a tone harsh by reason of the strong effort required to make himself audible, and the still stronger constraint he placed upon his words,

'I do not see, Miss Drummond, why you should distress yourself so much.'

Once again she lifted her tear-stained face, this time to look at him with amazement, while she mutely pointed to the paper in his hand.

'No, person who knows anything of the world,' went on Mr. Gayre, 'attaches the slightest importance to an anonymous letter.'

She rose and stood erect before him—stood encircled by the indefinable charm which was her birthright—stood in her youth and sorrow to say fully what was in her mind.

'That letter is true,' she gasped ; 'I feel it, I know it. I was not thankful enough for my misfortunes. God had been very gracious to me. Though He saw fit to separate us, it was not by the great gulf of Death, and I murmured. O Mr. Gayre, what is

to be done! Can't you—won't you—help us! It may seem nothing to you, but it means life to Oliver!' And in an access of grief this girl-woman, with the marvellous eyes, and hair such as the Venetian painters dreamed of but rarely saw, and a tender heart and a nature grand and strong as ever was held within a lissom binding, flung herself on the floor, and held out her clasped hands in an attitude of agonised entreaty to the man Sir Geoffrey had taught her to regard as well-nigh omnipotent.

'For Heaven's sake don't kneel to me ! entreated that man, recoiling a little ; for he was still sufficiently master of himself to know he dared not lift the prostrate figure, lest he should strain it to his heart.

'Gently, gently does it, old lady,' said the Baronet, as, without the smallest desire to take her to *his* heart, he raised the one human being he loved with an unselfish attachment, and placed her again in her chair. 'Don't frighten my brother-in-law. He's very slow, but he is indeed very sure. He'll find a way out of the mess, or my name's not Geoffrey Chelston ; and, as I feel I am totally in the way, I'll just—to put the matter colloquially—walk my chalks. You and Gayre will hit on some plan ; I know you will. In sorrow, as in love, two are company, you remember, but a third is a confounded nuisance. And look here, Gayre, this room may be all very fine, but it is beastly cold. Don't you see Susan is shivering like an aspen? Haven't you got a fire somewhere? and can't you manage a cup of tea or coffee, or—anything for her while you are talking over what is to be done? Come along, Sue ; come downstairs with me, and cheer up,

my beauty! Gayre will find a way out of this trouble. Don't cry your eyes out. What would Papa Geoff do if he never saw the sunshine dancing in them again, eh?

Discoursing which innocent and childlike prattle, Sir Geoffrey guided the girl from step to step and led her into the library, where he wheeled up the easiest chair to the fire, placed her 'where you'll get thawed,' patted her on the shoulder, said 'ta-ta,' and left her to 'come to,' while he walked into the hall, followed by Mr. Gayre, to whom he made a sign, intimating he wished to speak to him alone.

By, of course, the merest accident Sir Geoffrey turned into the dining-room, and, without waiting to be asked whether he would have anything to 'pick him up,' in the merest absence of mind laid hold of a decanter and poured out a beaker.

'Pon my soul,' he said, 'I don't know how women manage to get through their troubles on tea; but then, to be sure, look at the state they reduce themselves to.'

'You have at least the consolation of feeling an undue use of tea has not destroyed your nerves,' observed Mr. Gayre.

'No, faith; and I'll take very good care it never has the chance. Now just look at Susan, poor Susan! she's all to bits. Girl, too, who used not to know the meaning of the word "fear." Why, she'd have gone at anything in the old days; and here she is to-night all of a tremble because she hears her lover is sick. And that reminds me she'll need a very light hand, Gayre—she will indeed; she'll not stand much. You'll have to be very cautious. Let her think she's having her head. I don't suppose we can do anything, really; but there's no

need to tell her that. In my opinion it would be a capital ending to the whole business if Dane did die; but of course it isn't natural she should take that view. And now I'll be off. Well, thank you, I may as well have a thimbleful more. Don't trouble, I'll help myself. As I was going to say, when you have done your talk, bring her up to North Bank. She must not be alone in those lodgings. Peggy's gone to the play with Mrs. Wookes, and is to stop the night; but that makes no odds. Mrs. Lavender will make Susan comfortable. Excellent woman, Mrs. Lavender, though she is so confoundedly ugly. No; I can't stop another minute, really; besides, I'm only keeping you, when I know you are longing to speak comfort to my poor girl. Good-night, good-night. Bless you, Gayre; and 'Gayre' was left alone.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AT LAST.

WHEN Mr. Gayre reëntered the library, Susan was not sitting by the fire, as Sir Geoffrey had left her, but standing in the middle of the room, with a dazed hunted look on her changed face.

'I think I had better go,' she said. 'I know you can do nothing for me; if you could, you would have done it ere this. Sir Geoffrey made me come. He thought amongst your friends—but I told him—'

'Do sit down,' entreated Mr. Gayre; and he led her to the hearth, when she almost fell into a chair, and sat staring with unseeing eyes at the leaping fire-light.

'How do people go through such misery as mine and keep silence?' she murmured at last.

'I am sorry to be so troublesome; but O, if you knew—if you could imagine—' and she broke once again into passionate and uncontrollable weeping.

'Do try to compose yourself, Miss Drummond,' entreated Mr. Gayre; 'you distress me intensely.'

'I can't help it,' sobbed the girl, 'though my tears won't give him life or liberty. If I could only do something—go to some one! Is there no human being, Mr. Gayre, who could help us? Think of him—lying ill—dying, perhaps, in that dreadful place! If it were your own brother, or your friend—but I am talking folly! I will go now. I must not take up your time any longer.'

'You must not think of going yet,' he answered. 'I have ordered some tea for you;' and even as he spoke tea appeared. 'You will have a cup, will you not?'

'It would choke me,' said Susan, shaking her head. 'I feel as if I never should eat or sleep again.'

Mr. Gayre stood before the fire, looking down upon the drooping figure, the bowed head. At that moment his soul was not a battlefield, where good and evil were waging an almost equal war. No; the fight had ended, and he remained silent only because he was waiting for words in which to express his meaning.

All at once he spoke.

'If a man were to say to you to-night, this moment, "I will strive to set your lover free—there is one way in which I *might* be able to obtain his release," what would you do for that man? You spoke the other night as though no price which could be asked would seem to you too great.'

'Nor would it!' she cried, lifting her swollen eyes, lit with a sudden gleam of almost despairing hope. 'Do you know such a

man? What would I not do for him! Every sixpence I own in the world he should have. I would be his servant—his slave.'

'Would you be his *wife*?'

She did not say anything; she only looked at him in bewilderment.

'Would you be *my* wife?'

It was done. If he lived a thousand years he could never recall that utterance. Till his dying day the expression of incredulous horror that came into her face will never quite fade from his memory.

'You—you—are jesting!' she gasped.

'Am I?'

'I did—not—think you would have jested at such a time; but—'

'Do I look as if I were jesting?' he asked.

If she had lifted her eyes she would have seen a man with the whole fashion of his countenance altered; his lips compressed, his cheeks pale as death, his gaze bent on her with a terrible concentration; but she did not lift her eyes. She shrank a little into herself, mentally cowering under the weight and horror of the blow he had dealt.

'You never thought of this?' was his next question.

'No; never once.'

'Did no idea of anything of the sort ever cross your mind?'

'No; never once.'

'You supposed my care for and interest in you arose from the extreme amiability of my disposition?'

'I thought you were my friend.'

'There is no such thing as friendship, there can be no such thing as friendship, between man and woman,' he said almost fiercely. 'It is either love or indifference, unless indeed it may be hate,' with bitter emphasis on the word. 'Perhaps you hate me now?'

She did not answer; she did not even make a sign of dissent.

'And merely because I ask for something in return. Yes; that is always the way with your sex; they are willing—eager to seize every valuable a man has to give, his love, his life, his money, his time, his thought; and then if he wish for the smallest return, he is thrust out into the cold, to find a path through the lonely darkness of his after existence as best he may.'

'There is little I would not have done for you, Mr. Gayre,' she answered, and there was no faltering in her voice; 'but what you ask is not mine to give; and if it were—'

'Yes; if it were!'

'I should not give it to you.'

'I have made such a mistake in my mode of asking for it!'

'Yes, you have made a mistake. I was grateful to you; I was indeed. But now—O, how can I ever forget what you said a minute ago!'

'I do not want you to forget it. I want you to remember—No; you must not go yet. As you have heard so much, you must hear more.'

'I must not,' answered the girl. 'I feel as truly Oliver Dane's wife as if I were married to him, and the words which would have insulted me had I been his wife insult me now.'

'You are mistaken. I am not insulting you. I am offering you the truest, deepest, most loyal love of which my nature is capable.'

'Love!' she murmured softly.

'Yes, a man's love, not a woman's—a love I have felt ever since I first saw your face—that I have struggled with, fought against—that has for months past cursed every hour of my life—that is killing me—that I am glad

you at last know has crushed all things noble and honest out of my heart, and made me so base I am capable of driving a bargain with you—you, for whom I would die, if, in dying, I could win one look of love.'

She stared at him appalled; the very calmness of his tone and the restraint of his manner lent a greater terror to the passion of his words.

'I never meant to tell you this,' he went on, 'God is my witness. When you entered my house to-night I had no more intention of letting you catch even a glimpse of the war I have been waging with myself than you have of marrying me. A thousand times I have been on the point of saying something which would have parted us for ever; but I refrained. All unconsciously you have tempted and tried me as man surely never was tempted and tried before; yet I resisted. But a man cannot go on resisting for ever, and I am glad my resolution has broken at last. Yes, if, after to-night, we never meet again, I shall not feel sorry you know that which, but for your own utter absorption, you would have known long ago.'

She sat like one stunned. The tears, which had well-nigh blistered her fair cheeks, were dry. Her eyes felt as if red-hot sparks had been thrown in them; her lips were parched, her tongue dry; and through all there was a pervading sense of shame and misery—of having lost something of great price—of having looked through an unclean window out on a world which never again for ever could seem just the same to her.

For the moment she forgot even her lover—forgot his trouble; as sometimes, in the worry and turmoil of daily life, we forget for a brief space our dead. Then it

all came back to her, and she lifted her head and gazed up at Mr. Gayre with a hunted appealing expression on that face capable of silently saying so much.

'I ask you to forgive me,' she said at last, with a great effort. 'I have been absorbed—and—I did—not know.'

'No, you did not know,' he answered, with a sad cadence in his voice which touched her inexpressibly.

'I am very, very sorry.'

'Why should you be sorry? You have only wrecked a man's life. What are twenty lost lives to a woman?'

'Good-night, Mr. Gayre.' She was standing now. 'Do not let us part in bitterness. I will try to think of all this only as a bad dream.'

'How very kind you are!' he answered.

'Good-night.'

'Wait a moment. What about Mr. Dane? Is he to stop where he is, or—'

She clasped her hands.

'Can you really do anything for him, or were you merely trying me?'

'I cannot say. I would have striven.'

'And you will do it for him, though you think me so ungrateful?'

'No, by Heaven, that will. I not!' said Mr. Gayre, a torrent of rage breaking down all the barriers he himself had raised. 'You have made your choice—abide by it. I shall not try to influence you further. This night I part company with you and your lover. Do what you can for him without my help. Why should I be the one to give up everything?'

With a despairing gesture she turned a little aside, walked to

the table, then stood and faced him with a steady front.

'What is it you could do for Oliver?' she asked.

'I have no intention of doing anything now,' he answered.

'What was it, then, you thought you might have done?'

'I regret being rude to a lady, but I must decline to answer that question.'

'Do you think you could have done anything?'

'I could have tried.'

'But you have always tried.'

'Well, yes, that is true. Still, I felt my trying would not effect much, or perhaps I should not have been so eager in the matter. Before you go, it is better for you to understand me thoroughly. I believe there is one chance for your friend, which, properly worked, may unlock his prison-door. Shall I try that chance, or not? It is a question for you to decide. I will not hurry your decision. Take till ten o'clock to-morrow morning, and then give me an answer. On the one hand, liberty for the man you profess to love; on the other, happiness to the man who loves you. For I do love you as Mr. Dane never could. I ask nothing from you unless he walks out a free man. Should that day never come till the term of his sentence has expired, you will remain at perfect liberty to greet him when he returns to you.'

'And he is ill—perhaps dying now.'

'I know nothing of that; he may or he may not be ill. As I said before, you ought to attach no importance to an anonymous letter.'

'But I dreamt last night he was dead.'

'I really fear I consider a dream of less importance even than an anonymous letter.'

'And if he did die'

'I should say he would be better dead than alive at Portland.'

She did not answer. She looked down at the carpet, then up at Mr. Gayre, then down at the carpet again before she said,

'I will go now. I am sorry to have given so much trouble.'

'You will return to North Bank?'

She shrank at the sound of the name, and said,

'O, no—no! I will go home.'

'As you wish, of course. You must allow me to see you to Islington.'

'Don't, please don't!' she entreated, with a fervour which was far from complimentary.

'Just as you like. My servant shall go with you. I will send him for a cab.'

'I would much rather walk.'

'As this will most likely be the last time on which you may ever be harassed by my advice, I must entreat of you to do what I counsel now. You are in no state to walk, even were such a course fitting. I will not intrude further upon you till Rawlings has procured a conveyance.'

He did not trust himself to stay longer with her. He knew he had spoken roughly, barbarously, yet he felt that the words uttered were as nothing in comparison with those he had kept back, and enough of manly instinct still remained to make him dread a prolongation of the interview. Had she gone on crying and breaking her heart, had she pleaded to him for help and mercy, he might have at least kept the devil, that was tearing him sore, out of sight; but the horrible disappointment of finding she would not even entertain a thought of buying her lover's liberty on the terms was more than he could bear.

'Let her try what she can do, even with Fife's help,' he thought bitterly; 'and if Dane die while the affair is being messed up and muddled, she will at least have the consolation of knowing she remained true to her sex, if not to her lover. Yet I was a brute. What other answer could I expect?'

Had he only been able to obtain a glimpse of Susan's mind, he would have found the very abruptness of his declaration, the suddenness by which she was made aware of the nature of his feelings, had produced an effect on the girl's imagination years of gentle wooing would have failed to do.

She felt horror-stricken as he laid bare before her the passion of his soul, and her strongest sentiment, next to what Oliver was to do, seemed an absorbing pity for the man who loved her vainly and a deep reproach towards herself.

'I ought to have known,' she thought, as she sat looking into the depths of the blazing fire, that seemed no fiercer than the heart the secret of which she had been allowed to see. 'I have been all wrong. This is what Margaret was insinuating the other day. If we live in the world there are things we must not blind ourselves to;' and she covered her face, though there was no one but herself, to hide the shamed blushes crimsoning her cheeks as the full nature of the position in which she had placed herself was, in its nakedness, revealed.

'Your cab is at the door, ma'am,' said Rawlings, just as she reached this culminating point of utter misery.

Instinctively she drew down her veil ere passing out into the hall, where Mr. Gayre stood wait-

ing for her. Gravely he offered his arm, which she just touched with the tips of her fingers. Rawlings opened the cab door, and, at a sign from his master, mounted the box beside the driver, while Mr. Gayre, standing bare-headed on the pavement, said, in a low voice,

'Shall I come for your answer to-morrow, or should you like me to send?'

She paused a second. His question put the whole of the issue at stake into a concrete form before her.

'I will write,' she at last murmured.

'Remember that after to-morrow I can do nothing.'

'Nothing?'

'Nothing whatever. And now, in case we never meet again (whether we do or not rests with yourself), let me say good-bye and God bless you!'

He was gone! Before she had time to speak, almost before she was able to draw back the hand she had half stretched forth to lay on his, she saw him pass out of the darkness of night into the solitude of his desolate home. The door closed behind him, and she was driving with her own memories and fears, for bitter company, through the streets.

There are assuredly times in life when we are incapable of sustained thought. At such periods the mind drifts like a dead thing over the ocean of being; it is tossed by the waves and buffeted by the currents and driven by the wind; but, till it awakens in a different hereafter, it knows next to nothing of the tempest it has ridden through—the incongruous points it has touched, the abysses it has swept over.

Mr. Gayre had reached that state. Thought was out of the question. Impulse and passion

had urged him on, till, among billows of temptation, the better life was beaten well-nigh into insensibility. He paced his room till he was weary, but when, exhausted, he flung himself into his chair, he could not rest. Once again, driven by the fiends within him, he was forced to resume that ceaseless march, up and down—up and down, till he had walked miles over those few yards of carpet.

His servant was a long time absent. Islington might, to his irritable fancy, have been in Africa, judging from the period occupied in covering the distance.

Three times had he rung to inquire if Rawlings had returned, and he was just about to ring again, when the man entered with a note.

'I was detained, Colonel,' he said apologetically; 'the lady kept me over an hour while she wrote this letter. You have been wanting me, sir?'

'Yes—no—it does not matter now,' answered his master, scarcely waiting till the door closed ere tearing open Susan's missive.

'I cannot stop till morning,' these were the words it contained, 'to tell you that I have made up my mind—I agree.'

She had added a line after this, and then blotted it out. Despite his earnest endeavour, Mr. Gayre failed to gather what she had written and deleted; but there stood forth, as if in letters of fire, the sentence he once never expected to read—I agree. She did not trouble him with the reasons which had caused so extraordinary a change, she made no prayer, put forward no excuse; the paper was not stained with tears, the calligraphy was clear as usual. In the travail of her soul such a decision could only have been born, yet there was no hint of

agony in the cold decision of her resolve.

'I AGREE!' After hope was dead, at a moment when despair was holding high carnival in his soul, he had got what he wanted. Success was his at last; and success had come thus.

After a time, when the first astonishment was over, and his scattered senses began slowly to return to their owner, he sat down and wrote Susan a long letter.

What he said he never afterwards could clearly remember;

but it calmed and comforted him. After the fret and turmoil of the week he felt indeed strangely tranquil when, in the early morning, he went out himself to drop his letter in a pillar-box near at hand.

'I will call,' he had written, 'about nine to-morrow to see you;' and behold it was to-morrow already, and he had but time to catch a few hours' sleep ere Rawlings roused him with the words,

'Seven o'clock, Colonel!'

(To be continued.)

THE SCILLY ISLES.

THE early history of Scilly loses itself in a legendary past. Whether there ever were islands called Cassiterides is as uncertain as the existence of Lionese, the submerged land which tradition says once was populous and rich, and lay west and south of the Land's End. If it ever were so, then some great seismic disturbance must have occurred in this part of the world at a time when no records were kept. Dr. Borlase, a Cornish *savant* of the last century, would place such a catastrophe somewhere in the ninth century, and finds traces, in the antiquities of the islands, of their having supported a much larger population than their present area would allow.

However this may be, there can be no doubt that, in the tenth century, a priory of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors, was founded by the Saxon King Athelstan at Tresco. To that priory and island were also granted the isles of St. Sampson, St. Elidius, and St. Theona. Henry I. placed the priory under the abbots of Tavistock, and they, from that time to the dissolution of their monastery by Henry VIII., exercised complete ecclesiastical control in Scilly. Pope Celestin confirms the gift of the priory to Tavistock, and mentions a fifth island, 'Nullo,' called so possibly because it was uninhabited, or no spirit-patron had yet been found for it.

The monks, if we may form an opinion from the scanty records, were often in hot water. The 'brethren of the monastery of St.

Nicholas' suffered occasionally from *ennui*, perhaps. They could not be always praying for sailors and the souls of powerful friends. Scrambling over rocks after puffins was a source both of amusement and profit; but it was a pleasure naturally short-lived. Puffins are not to be caught all the year round. Of course they had all wrecks—that salt of Scilly life—which should have given a spur and a motive to their insular rambles. Gold, whale, scarlet cloth, fir, and masts were especially reserved from wreckage for the king; but we may hope that St. Nicholas was not without a share, if such good things were thrown upon the shore.

In Stephen's reign, Richard de Wick kept from the priory the tenths of Scilly—namely, conies. However, the monks brought upon him the heavy hand of the Bishop of Exeter. Richard confessed his fault at the altar of the Blessed Rumon at Tavistock; the abbot and the convent looked on the while. Richard's statement was to this effect: 'He didn't know any better; in fact, he thought the tenths were not the right of the abbot and the brethren of Scilly. Now, however, he had come to see that the conies were really intended as an offering for the good of his own soul and the souls of his parents, and of Reginald the Earl of Cornwall, his lord.'

Drew de Barrentine was governor of the islands for the King in Henry VIII.'s reign. He was of service to that monarch in his Gascon wars. From an Exchequer

document of 1251 we find allowed, 'Drew de Barrentine, governor of our islands, forty marks, which he paid, by our order, to our beloved and faithful subject and servant, Nicholas de Moles; and thirty marks, which he laid out for his expenses when he was last in our service at Gascony.' The importance of Scilly to this country as a place of arms in time of war seems to have been recognised even then, as it invariably was in all the naval struggles of our history.

We are forgetting our good friends the monks, however. Edward I. caught them in very naughty conduct indeed. Ranulph de Blankminster was now the representative of royal authority, and paid yearly three hundred puffs for his privileges. He, like the Scillonian clergy, seems to have forgotten himself. Folk who had committed murder, and were guilty of wrecking and other felonies, had come to Scilly, and brought their stolen goods with them. Evidently, too, they were well received—quite *les bien venus*, indeed; wily bad characters clearly, who thought to themselves, 'Here's an out-of-the-way spot; we can do what we like here.' They were not unlike some modern tourists, who, under the influence of the civilisation of the Haymarket, wander as conquering heroes in the summer through English bathing-places. Even so long ago as Edward I.'s reign the desperadoes reckoned without their host. This was William le Poer. Edward I.'s writ calls him 'Our coroner in the islands of Scilly, belonging to our county of Cornwall.' He went to inquire at La Val (Holy Vale, St. Mary's) and Tresco into this matter. Ranulph de Blankminster and the votaries of St. Nicholas seized the coroner, imprisoned and ill-used him, and, as the writ runs, 'did maliciously procure

him to be kept at the said town of De la Val until such time as the said coroner paid a fine' to them 'and the malefactors of one hundred shillings.' This was bad work. It was no wonder if William le Poer made grievous complaint. It was not what was to be expected of holy men—St. Nicholas in league with wreckers, forsooth! His 'elderly namesake' must have been rampant in the islands. It is no wonder the *Ingoldsby Legends* portray him meditating about this time on 'the red seashore;' and we may account the more readily for his acuteness in the matter of the sack, and for the fact that the 'old man' was 'dressed just like a saint.' Ranulph de Blankminster's conduct was outrageous; for he held the Castle of Ennor in Scilly 'by the service of finding and maintaining twelve armed men at all times, for keeping the peace in those parts.' The King's justices, Hugh Peverel and others, soon set matters right. Ranulph, with his religious and lay companions in evil, was outlawed. To escape the consequences of outlawry, they surrendered themselves up at Launceston Castle, and were kept in prison till the second year of the reign of Edward II., when fresh justices were appointed to finally decide the matter. What their decision was we know not; for after this we have no more documents to guide us.

The long wars of Edward III.'s reign made Scilly a dangerous locality. The King relieved the monks of their obligation to say mass daily, on condition that they provided two secular chaplains to do the work. The times were so rough that, ten years before his death, the victor of Crecy has to remind 'all and singular dukes, earls, barons, admirals, knights,

mayors, sheriffs, masters and mariners of ships, and especially the constable of the Castle of the Isle of Ennor,' that he, 'the King, had taken under his special protection' the priory of St. Nicholas, 'the prior, monks, chaplains and menservants, possessions, and all things whatsoever.' Sailors of all nations resorted to Scilly. They damaged and impoverished the priory to such an extent that the necessary repairs were neglected. Scilly, for want of a protector, must have become a sort of no-man's land, delivered up to all the roving scoundrelism of the sea.

For the next three reigns Scillonian history is a blank. In the beginning of Henry VI.'s reign, when the Pucelle was rousing France to enthusiasm and filling English hearts with superstitious dread, Sir John Colshul holds the islands of the King, 'as of his Castle of Launceston.' His authority, I surmise, originated from intermarriage with the Blankminsters. This was the state of things till Henry VIII.'s reign, when, in 1539, Tresco Priory disappeared with the dissolution of the monasteries. Whether Cromwell, the King's vicar-general, sent his spies so far west to discover hidden naughtiness is involved in the general obscurity that reigns over Scillonian history till the thirteenth year of Queen Elizabeth, when the long connection of the Godolphin family with Scilly begins and continues till 1798.

The first lease was granted to Francis Godolphin, Esq., for thirty-eight years, on condition that he defended the islands for the Queen. He was knighted in 1580, and in 1583 became Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall, with the command of her Majesty's troops in that county. He, doubtless,

held no sinecure, for the air was fraught with rumours of the coming Armada.

The builders of the Star Castle, St. Mary's, must have cast many a curious glance towards the southern sea. Probably some of Drake's and Hawkins' rovers ran into the spacious roadstead at times, in the anxious vigil for the first coming of the invading armament. The danger passed, and the year 1593 saw the Star Castle complete, and England safe.

The very extensive powers of the Godolphins were continued in a second lease of fifty years to Sir William Godolphin. The rental was doubled, raised to twenty pounds a year. From the terms of the lease there can be little doubt that Scilly was regarded as a naval outpost. The family of Godolphin were allowed large seigniorial rights that they might look well after it.

Scillonians do not seem to have felt keen sympathy with the Parliamentary party at the outbreak of the civil war of the Great Rebellion, if we may form any judgment from a burlesque 'petition from the islands of Scilly,' printed in London in 1642 by one Thomas Banks.

They pray that as they have 'of late understood by fisher-boats that come from England of certain discord arising between the King and Parliament, upon what ground and small reason' they 'cannot apprehend, so that the whole land is like to be divided into fractions for quickening quarrels in the church-windows, they smelling their danger afarre off, and out of deare affection to themselves,' 'earnestly and hartily desire that they may dissemble themselves together in a posture of warre.' They ask for 'bills, bowes, arrows, and speares;' and, with lumbering facetiousness,

they desire that some 'red, terrible, ill-looking vizard' may be sent to them, and 'a ship full of the strongest garlike,' so that, 'having put on those fearful vizards, they may affright their enemies with their very looks, and blow them away with their strong-scented breaths.'

They were perfect Gallios in their indifference. 'As for bishops, they cared not greatly whether there were any in England. Our constitution,' they said, 'is not so hot that we can endure none, nor our affections so could that we cannot permit any.' They were not partial to the Roundheads either. 'Surely,' they continue, 'the Brownists and the Roundheads had their original from one that was born in Scilly; for is not their madde kind of preaching in tubs a silly faction; are not their teaching against the back of a chaire and ignorant instructing at a table's end all silly inventions? Besides, their short circumcised hayres make them all look like syllyes.'

They finally 'desire that the noise of warres may be silenced, peace generally throughout the land embraced, and no noise heard in our Jerusalem but kitching-drums—that is, chopping of pot-hearbs on Sunday mornings—that so we may not be put into such feares and terrors to the spoiling of the witts of the inhabitants of Silley, especially women of Silley or Silley women, who neere use to pray or blesse themselves but at the sudden report of warres.'

The circumstances of the time were too serious for jesting. In this year Charles I. raised his standard at Nottingham, Edghill was fought, and two of England's noblest sons, Falkland and Hampden, fell on opposing sides. Scillonians saw more of war than they probably bargained for. With the

collapse of the royal armies in 1645, Scilly sprang into notoriety. It was a place of refuge for the fugitive Cavaliers. Here came Culpepper and Prince Charles. Sir John Glanville commanded a large force in the islands, and had 'commissioned officers enough to head an army.' Privateers from Scilly harassed the Channel trade; and the authorities were assailed with complaints from merchants and traders. At length Scilly became such 'a thorn in the side,' that an expedition was fitted out against it under the command of Blake and Ascue. They first seized Bryher and Tresco, and from them opened fire with great guns on St. Mary's (May 8th, 1651). At the end of that month a landing was effected at St. Mary's, and in the early part of June the gallant garrison surrendered, and was conveyed to Plymouth. Whitlock expresses thus the general gratification at the event: 'These islands will be a shelter to merchants, which before were their ruin, and are a check to the trade of many nations.' Von Ranke, commenting on the capture of Scilly in his *History of England in the Seventeenth Century*, gives vent to his surprise that the English Government have never utilised the advantageous position of Scilly by forming a naval port there.

Governor Godolphin left the islands on the outbreak of the civil troubles. The lease to his family, continued by Charles I. for fifty years, was renewed for eighty-nine years by William III. to Sidney Lord Godolphin. The latter was to pay forty pounds a year to the 'Receiver for the Duchy of Cornwall.' Further extensive powers are given in these letters patent, and supply the motive for them. This I have before alluded to. The islands were a naval outpost.

'It shall and may be lawful to and for the said Sidney Lord Godolphin, his executors and assigns, to take up and press his and their own tenants, 'tinnerns, and servants to serve the King's most excellent Majesty, his heirs and successors, under the said Sidney Lord Godolphin, within the said islands, territories, and rocks, and every or any of them, in the time of war, for the better keeping and defending of the said isles against the enemy during all the said term,' namely, eighty-nine years.

Lord Godolphin could not alienate the islands in any way without the royal consent, nor bequeath them to any of his daughters unless married and 'her husband meet to defend the said islands,' nor even 'to any other children within age, but only to such as shall be of years fit for their defence.' These limitations on the lord proprietor's powers reveal the purpose of the grant. Situate at the entrance of the Channel, this archipelago was invaluable to the country in a maritime war. Moreover, they might be seized by any power that for a time commanded the sea, and become an English Gibraltar.

Lord Godolphin was further empowered to erect a court of civil jurisdiction, to hear and determine causes; and could delegate his authority by appointing a magistrate to preside over it, reserving to himself a right of judgment in appeals.

He had 'all tythe of Scilly by land, and of fish taken at sea' and landed there, 'according to the custom of the islands from time immemorial.' There are evidently customs that 'work together for good' to some folk.

Scilly possessed a chronicler in the middle of the seventeenth century, a Mr. Heath, who for a

year was officer in the garrison at Scilly. The Admiralty was about this time building, at great expense, the fortifications which now surround the smaller of the two peninsulas into which St. Mary's, the largest of the Scilly Islands, is divided by arms of the sea. This writer is amusing in his descriptions of local customs. He attempts to be witty; but the ponderousness of his style clips his wings, and the result is—well, I will give my readers several specimens from the work of this writer, so that they may judge for themselves.

There was no medical man in the islands. 'For want of male practitioners in physic, the few diseases and hurts in these healthful islands have for these many years past been remedied by a society of skilful aunts, constituting a sort of college of physicians in Scilly, of which Aunt Sarah is the head or president, whose judgment at a long consultation is preferred to the rest, and who is first applied to in all difficulties. When they assemble upon a woe-ful, desperate, or doubtful case, they resign the patient to God and Nature, while the attending doctress provides a warm room, a nurse, and fit necessities, which coöperate with uncommon success. Common diseases here, not proceeding from luxury, laziness, and intemperance, are cured by one of the subordinate practitioners with a few simples, without calling in the assistance of a second or third graduate.'

This Heath intends as a slap at the doctors, for he proceeds:

'They are all good botanists, and have added a great many herbs to their catalogue, as also reduced many of the compounds of their dispensatory. They inspect not into the motions of atoms, particles, and corpuscles,

nor pretend to analyse substances, nor yet to explain cohesions and attractions, densities and rarefactions, which to them is unintelligible jargon.

'They aim not to discover the series of infinite causes and their dependent effects, but endeavour to excel in the experimental knowledge of their art. Their systems and hypotheses are to help those in distress for pity's sake rather than for profit. They have no ambition to be thought sagacious as conjurers by significant nods, shrewd looks, and mysterious hard words; nor do they assume an air of importance for the sake of a fee.

'However, they all understand the nature of propagation and the operation of midwifery, at which they are all reckoned very skilful artists, to whom the present generation of Scilly are beholden for their appearance in the world.'

Like Mr. Silas Wegg, Mr. Heath at times lapses into poetry. Here he sings:

'O mighty Phœbus! if you can, prescribe
A better practice for the learned tribe:
For which of all ye sons of art can vaunt
The cures accomplished by a Scilly—
Aunt?

The president of this remarkable college had 'a venerable long beard, which some imagine operates miraculously to the benefit of those who stroke it.'

His remarks on Scillonian marriages are not uninteresting. As they are naïve in their simplicity, my readers will pardon me for quoting them in full. 'Their marriages are performed without banns or license, and the chaplain's fee for the ceremony is what he chooses to take—a guinea, guinea and a half, or more, according to the haste or desire of the couple to be married, or as the chaplain and they can agree. If they dislike the price

fixed by the chaplain, they are at liberty, he tells them, to cross the water to England, if they can make a cheaper bargain. But considering the trouble and expense of such a voyage, they generally comply with his terms, except when a couple go to England (by advice of Aunt Sarah) to keep the time of their marriage secret.'

'About fifty years ago,' Heath wrote in 1750, 'it was usual for those inhabitants who desired it to marry by first having their banns published in the church at Scilly, for which, and tying the knot, the chaplain in those times was paid five shillings, or not above half a guinea. But if the banns were not asked, nor desired that they should, the custom was then, as at present, for the chaplain to take what he could get. Soldiers and persons at that time not in circumstances to pay for being joined either joined themselves or were joined gratis, i.e. they were joined by vows, or taking one another's word, which was binding as long as they could agree. And this sort of conscientious binding was observed to hold as fast, and be as good a security of their future felicity, as if the parties had been tied together with the sacred shreds of matrimony. Their nuptials here are usually celebrated all the wedding-day with musick and dancing, concluding with the bride's dance at night.'

The memory of the Aunt Sarah of whom Heath speaks still lingers in Scilly; but she is better known as Aunt Sally Jenkins. Aunt and uncle were titles given to elderly people, and implied no relationship, in the person using them, to the person addressed.

Wakes were customary. 'When an islander dies, some friends sit up the first night with the dead

body, when it is a custom with them to feast cheerfully during the time.'

Christmas was a season of great festivity.

'The young people exercise a sort of gallantry among them called goose-lancing, when the maidens are dressed up for young men and the young men for maidens. They visit their neighbours in companies, where they dance and make their jokes upon what happened in the islands, when every person is humorously told of their own without offence being taken. By this sort of sport there is a spirit of wit and drollery kept up among the people. The maidens, who are sometimes dressed up for sea-captains and other officers, display their alluring graces to the ladies, who are young men equipped for the purpose, and the ladies exert their talents to them in courtly and amorous addresses.'

'At this time serenades in the night were in practice, under the windows of the fair islanders, which at this day are not quite forgot.'

'Cattle, fowls, sheep, and hogs' were 'mostly the property of the upper people in the country, who sold at high prices, reserving their stock for the first top market at strangers coming in.'

'The poorer sort of inhabitants never want a sufficiency of fish and potatoes (their common food), nor yet of beer and barley bread, which abound throughout the islands.' The inhabitants had enough malt for exportation. A grain called 'pillis' they used, when ground, instead of oatmeal. Some sorts of provisions were cheap. Eggs were sold at five for a penny, 'a very good fowl' for sixpence, and a couple of conies at the same price.

The islanders derived advantage from the presence among them of a considerable number of troops, and, at this time, of labourers engaged in the fortifications. During easterly winds the harbour was filled with merchantmen, each of which added its quota to the general prosperity of Scilly.

A court of twelve, the presiding magistrate being Lord Godolphin's deputy in the place, sat to hear civil causes once a month. Their duties do not appear to have been onerous. The ducking-chair at the pier-head and the stocks seem to have been all that was needed to keep the restive members of society in order.

The names of most of the present inhabitants of Scilly came into the islands in the seventeenth century. Of descendants of the antecedent population there are scant traces, if any. The progenitors of the Scillonians of to-day 'followed in the wake' of the Godolphins.

The life of Scilly in the last century does not seem to have been altogether dull. The Godolphin tenure ceased in 1798; and with the nineteenth century a new era opens up, which I shall not allude to here.

As I have taken so much from Mr. Heath, let me, in conclusion, give an extract from verses in which he sings the praises of the noble family who so long presided over the destinies of Scilly:

'O blest Scillonians — favourites of Heaven!

To whom so wise a governor is given!
You never felt the iron hand of power;
Oppression never landed on your shore;
The pride of office never frowned on you;
No harpy lawyers do your islands know;
No tipstiffs, bailiffs, pettyfoggers dare
Presume to stretch their griping talons
there.

Since a Godolphin, with pacific sway,
Has ruled your isles, as Phœbus rules
the day.'

FRANK BANFIELD, M.A.

TRUE TO THE CORE.

A West Indian Story.

VERY many years ago, when I was but a young assistant-surgeon in her Majesty's army, I was stationed at Stony Hill, in the island of Jamaica. It was a place most charmingly situated in the Port Royal mountains, some twelve or fourteen hundred feet above sea-level, and commanded an extensive view of the harbour and town of Kingston, of the naval port and shipping of Port Royal, and of the Palisades, these last being a narrow slip of sand connecting the mainland with Port Royal aforesaid. Originally Stony Hill had been built as a sanatorium for white troops; but the fatal experience of many a regiment having proved that it was not out of the range of yellow fever, these sorts and conditions of soldiers had been marched out, and less susceptible black ones marched in, so that I found a detachment of a West Indian battalion—a corps of Africans—in garrison there while my lines were cast in its by no means unpleasant quarters.

Well, one forenoon, while I was at 'second breakfast' (lunch), with my cheery friend and constant companion, Lieutenant Charles O'Sullivan of the Engineers, enjoying the many tropical good things the messman had provided, there entered to us Major Smythe, our commanding officer, who, addressing me, said, 'Dr. Vernon, there is work for you to be up and doing. A negro has just ridden into the barrack-yard on a mule and brought me this note. It is apparently in Spanish, a language not in my vocabulary,

though fortunately in yours; but from the word *medico* which I see, and which of course means doctor, and from what my orderly has gathered from the muleman, there has been, I fear, a terrible accident hereabouts;' and he handed me a slip of paper torn from a pocket-book, and hastily scribbled over in pencil. It was, as the Major conjectured, in the Castilian tongue, and translated ran thus:

'Señor Commandant, for the love of God, spare your doctor to come here instantly [where?]; Domingo will show him. Lose not a moment, I beseech you;' and it was signed 'Enrique de León.'

I rose at once from table, and ordered my hill pony, a rough-and-ready country-bred animal, to be saddled.

'Five minutes, Major, and I'm off,' I exclaimed.

'Oi am wid ye, Vernon,' said O'Sullivan, 'if so be it's agrayable.'

'Assuredly, Charley,' I replied; 'you will be useful. Clap a good strong knife and a ball of twine into your pocket; it may be a breakdown of a carriage.'

I rushed to the hospital, selected haphazard a few instruments and appliances—I knew not what was really needed—and in a very short time O'Sullivan and I, escorted by Domingo, were tearing, without much regard to life or limb, along the narrow rugged bridle-path that led down the declivity of the mountains to a flat at their base. This reached, we

crossed full-speed an open grass-grown savannah, or plain, of no great extent; then presently arriving at the foot of another portion of the range, began to ascend a much steeper and wilder road than that by which we had just now travelled.

If we had had leisure or inclination to look about us, the grandeur and beauty of the scenery which existed at every step of the way must have elicited enthusiastic admiration from both of us, for in no country in the world is there more of the sublime and the picturesque than in this 'Land of Springs.' But the deep and perpendicular precipices we edged, with mountain torrents foaming and roaring in their gorges; the hillsides luxuriant with trees and shrubs and creepers, and brilliant with flowers of every hue, we skirted; the glimpses we got of the smiling plains studded with estates or 'pens,' their 'great houses,' negro huts, and works glittering in the sunshine; still further away the vista of 'the blue, the fresh, and open sea,' were all and each disregarded in our anxiety to be on the spot to which our guide was leading.

After we had ridden rather more than three miles—they seemed six—we came suddenly where the road wound round a projecting spur of the mountain, upon a scene which long haunted my memory.

In front of a group of three or four negroes, who were all howling and lamenting after the manner of the West Indian 'nigger' in affliction, but doing nothing else, stood a gentleman of some fifty years or more of age. That he was a foreigner was clear, for he wore a long beard and moustache, facial decorations never affected at all by Englishmen of the time. He was also of Jewish

race; that his marked, but singularly handsome, Semitic features told at a glance. There he was, his head bowed down on his breast, his hands clasped together, his eyes streaming with tears, his face the picture of abject despair, his every expression that of 'grief which knows not consolation's name.'

As we dismounted and approached he made an effort to compose himself, seized the hand of O'Sullivan, who was a little in advance of me, and cried rather than said,

'El señor medico militar! mi amigo, my bueno amigo! O, tantas muchas gracias que usted ha venido! Mia hija, mi carissima Zillah, luz de mi vida, muerta, muerta!' ('The army surgeon! my friend, my good friend! O, so many thanks that you have come! My daughter, my beloved Zillah, light of my life, dead, dead!')

O'Sullivan shook his head. 'No sabe; no Spanisho speakho, senhor; non sum Esculapius! La, la, nostro Sawbono; he voster lingo speak!'

Then Don Enrique de Léon—for he it was—came towards me, and, in a voice-broken with weeping, told me his sad tale.

He and his young daughter were riding homewards to Buena Esperanza, their coffee estate, higher up the mountain. Just at this spot, where, as I saw, the road narrowed, a huge iguana lizard chasing another had crossed from the 'bush' on the left to the precipice on the right side. The pony on which Zillah was mounted started, shied, touched the edge of the abyss, lost its footing, and in an instant fell over with its rider. 'O God of my fathers! these old eyes saw the beloved child hurled through the air into the fathomless depths

of the chasm, and these old ears heard her piercing shrieks of fear and agony as she was hurried to her grave below! Ay de mi, ay de mi! The joy of my heart is gone; it lies *there*!

O'Sullivan and I peeped over the giddy brink of the precipice where the poor distracted father indicated. For the first few yards it was as perpendicular as a wall and bare of vegetation, save some coarse ferns and lichens. Then it sloped for a little distance on to a sort of abrupt, narrow, grass, bamboo, and bramble-clothed ledge or bank; lower down there seemed to be a more tangled and larger wood-growth; lower still, we knew not what, but we could plainly hear the river brawling at what must have been the bottom of this pit of Acheron. Seemingly, if the first great difficulty of getting on to the ledge, which might be about twenty yards down, could be accomplished, an active man, with a firm foot and a steady head, might scramble, assisted by the trees and shrubs, to the stream itself.

From the negroes no action could be expected; it was with them, 'Hi, poor missy! hi, poor piccaninny! hi, my king!'

'Much croy, little *wool*, excipect upon their black curly pates,' as O'Sullivan observed.

But that dear fellow was not long an idle spectator of so harrowing a scene.

'Vernon,' said he, 'it is not in me nature to be tould that there is a human crayture, man or woman, young or old, whoite skin or black, in that ravine, and oi standing here loike a spalpeen or a choilde looking on. True, oi can see nothing, but oi'm afther going down, or troying to go down—which may not mane the same thing, howiver—to discover. Thanks to some tacheing in our

gymnasium at Woolwich, and yachting a bit, oi can cloimb a troifle, and hang on by me eyelids, as they say at say (sea). Once let me git me footing on the ledge, the rest sames aisy.'

'But how on to the ledge?' asked I.

'Oi'm thinking that there is cord and leather enuf about the halters and broyldes and saddles of these ponies and mules to give me a considerable drop over the steep front face of the cliff on to or near to that bank; aftherwards, faith, oi must take me chance. Oi'm doing what is roight, Vernon, what oi feel oi'm bound to do, and what neither you nor that poore auld gintleman there could do. Therefore, oi'll have a shy at it, trusting to Him who wills not that a sparrow fall for me success and me safety.'

'But supposing you reach the ledge safe and sound, Charley, and find, or even don't find, the poor girl, how to get you up again?'

'That has crossed me moinde. Hurry, Domingo, back agin to barracks; ask the Meejor to sind us some fathoms of rope, a hatchet, a pulley from me stores, and—happy thought—the canvas sacking of a soldier's bedstead; maybe we'll nade it. If Sapper Jones can come, so much the better.'

I wrote a hasty word to Smythe, put a half-dollar into Domingo's hand, and told him to be off.

'Before ye start, me nigger friend,' said Charley, addressing the man, 'a word wid ye: your mule's tethering cords; me tankee (thank you), Massa Domingo—away you go!'

Then did O'Sullivan set about the noble deed he had self-imposed, and which I shall try to describe.

Undoing the ropes and un-

buckling the reins and stirrup-leathers from the animals, he knotted and fastened them otherwise firmly together, and made one end of the line thus obtained secure to the stem of a small palm-tree which grew on the edge of the precipice where he intended to descend. Clearly the length was not enough, so he supplemented it with our large bandanna silk handkerchiefs and with the strong cotton Madras ones of the negroes. Altogether he may have got by this heterogeneous arrangement about fifteen yards of what he called 'deevarsified tackle.'

Then stripping off his jacket and waistcoat, he took me on one side, and, all his levity gone for the nonce, he said solemnly (I will dispense with his rich Cork brogue),

'Vernon, is it not a curious thing that here on the face of this Jamaica mountain, we stand three white men of three different religions—the Don there a Hebrew, you a Protestant, and I one of the old Christian faith, the Roman Catholic? What our wordy, but undemonstrative, companions the negroes are, who can tell? They profess the Church, but stick a good deal yet to "Obi." However, Jew or Christian, or what not, a word of earnest supplication for me to Him who is above us, and who holds us in the hollow of His hand—I can't but feel, dear old friend, that I am setting my life upon a cast—must avail much. Tell De Léon to say a prayer—offer up one yourself.'

'The Lord protect you, Charley,' I uttered, squeezing his hand.

'The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob keep you under the shadow of His wing, noble youth,' said De Léon, in trembling impressive tones, and laying his

hand on O'Sullivan's uncovered head.

'All roight, Senhor; you're spaking something that is koind and good to me, that oi can see and hear; but, as oi tould you before, Spanish no speaky, whoy, oi'm somewhat at loss to understand ye.'

For a moment or two I saw him in silent meditation; then presently he came up to me and said,

'Oi'm ready, and mark ye—willing.'

He pressed my hand convulsively, whispered in my ear but two words, which to my understanding were a volume, 'My mother,' bound the loose end of the line around his waist, and scrambled over the cliff.

'Lower away, inch by inch,' he said.

It was, believe me, a frightful sight to see him from where I stood, with the line in my hand, dangling in the air, now fending himself off from the rocks, now taking advantage of their slight projections to gain a footing, and so to give us and himself a second or two of rest. Thus, gradually, carefully was he being let down to the ledge, when—the tackle came to an end.

I knew that there must yet be several feet of descent, but I dared not peep over to see how many.

'O'Sullivan! I sang out.

'What is it, Vernon?'

'The line is paid out.'

'Then we are too short by a good deal more than oi care about. However, hold taut! Oi must risk the rest.'

There was a fumbling at the end of the tightened cordage, if I can so call it, as it was grasped in our hands—it was while he was undoing the handkerchief about his body—then presently the

movement ceased, the line slackened, and his weight from it was gone.

One and all of us craned over; O'Sullivan lay on the ledge motionless.

'Pobre muchacho, caro joven, a mi puerta, es sa muerta, si bueno, si intrepido!' ('Poor boy, dear youth, so good, so brave; his death lies at my door!')

'Hi, up aloft there!' a voice shouted.

'O'Sullivan?'

'Who else, think ye, is here-about?'

'Are you hurt?'

'No bones broken, oi think, but sartainly shaken. The drop was bad.'

'Thank God, you're uninjured! Do you see anything of the young girl?'

'Here's her straw hat; but her head's not in it; oi'm afther pulling meeself togither to luke for that.'

One instant longer and O'Sullivan again hailed us.

'Vernon!'

'What?'

'Oi've found her. Here she is just under the ledge; caught in the most marvellous way by a clump of bamboos.'

'Alive?'

'Yes, but perfectly sinseless; oi can't rouse her.'

'What's to be done?'

'Nothing, until we git the gear from Stony Hill.'

In feverish anxiety we were forced to wait until Domingo returned, and with him Major Smythe and Sapper Jones. They brought all we wanted and more. The first thing done was to cut a long thick bamboo from the 'bush,' and having 'bent' the pulley on to the end of it, and rove the rope through, to lash the cane to the tree before mentioned, making it to project well over the

precipice. Then we lowered the running line, which O'Sullivan caught.

'Have they brought the sacking, Vernon?'

'Yes.'

'Sind it down;' and it was done.

In what manner of way O'Sullivan was occupied with the canvas we could discern by lying flat down, with our faces peering over the cliff. He was adroitly extemporising a sort of hammock with 'guys,' by which he intended the girl to be raised.

Into it we could see him spreading the feathery leaflets of bamboo, blades of grass, fronds of fern, so as to form a soft and even couch. Then he disappeared into the thicket, but returned instantly, bearing in his arms, as if she were an infant, a lifeless female figure, and which carefully he put into the litter at his feet. He might indeed have said, with Hood,

'Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young and so fair.'

But no poesy was on the dear old fellow's lips at the time. 'Hoist away! handsomely! gently!' were the words that reached us.

Under the leverage, at its very extreme, the bamboo bent like a fishing-rod; but we knew it to be strong, and feared not its breakage. The litter or hammock, call it what you will, slung at the end of the line, swayed to and fro; but O'Sullivan had firm hold of the guy-rope and steadied it. As for its burden, had it been a theatrical dummy, placed for scenic effect, it could not have remained more inert and immobile.

A few hand-over-hand pulls, and we had the object of our toil and anxiety landed on the road-side. She was a girl of not more than eighteen or nineteen

years of age, and her figure, which a light close-fitting riding-habit displayed, was slightly but perfectly developed. Her head was bare, save a glorious profusion of long, bright, auburn hair, which fell in loose dishevelled locks upon her neck and shoulders. I don't think that I ever looked upon a lovelier face: one not the least like the Hebrew maiden in her beauty as we are accustomed either to recognise, or to believe we recognise, her; but more, much more, the comeliness of the Saxon demoiselle *pur sang* for generations. I shall not pause to descant upon her charms; I should convey to the reader but a poor impression of them even if I dwelt for a page or more of this magazine upon their attractiveness; besides this, as she lay, pale, inanimate, breathing heavily, and bleeding slightly from a wound on her forehead, whiter and smoother than alabaster, I had much more to think about than her beauty. I hastily examined her physical condition, and diagnosed concussion of the brain—there might be obscure fracture of the skull—a broken arm, a broken collar-bone, severe nervous shock, and the wound before mentioned, of itself unimportant.

The distracted father, as we raised his child, threw himself on the ground beside her, covered her face with passionate kisses, and bathed it with floods of tears.

'She will live, my doctor, my Zillah will live—say that my darling will live! A hundred doubloons if, with Jehovah's blessing, your god-like art saves her precious life!'

'I will do my very best, Don Enrique,' said I, 'trust me for that; but send at once for Chamberlayne, he is our Jamaica Ast-

ley Cooper; I cannot, single-handed, accept the entire responsibility of the case. Who will ride post haste to Kingston for Chamberlayne, and bring him to Buena Esperanza?'

'I am your man,' answered the Major; and he was away at a hand-gallop with the very words in his mouth. Meantime, in the same way in which Zillah de Léon had been raised her gallant preserver had been got up; and now he stood at my side bruised, bleeding, exhausted, but plucky and cheery, and thinking less of his heroic deed than any one around him.

I could not say much; an Englishman, whether in his joy or his trouble, is a reticent undemonstrative species of the *genus homo*. Not so, however, our Spaniard. He clasped O'Sullivan round the neck, drew him to his breast, kissed his hands and his cheeks, and lavished upon him every superlative adjective of admiration and adoration his language is rich in.

'It is enuf, Senhor, quite enuf; indade, jist a leetle too much in regard to the lip service. Howivir, oi'm overjoyed that God has made me so far in-stroomental in saving that pretty colleen of yours from being aten (eaten) by the John Crows' (a sort of carrion vulture). 'Come, let's be taking her to the estate, Vernon.'

By the aid of sticks and withes and bamboos, O'Sullivan and his Sapper soon converted the canvas sacking into a rough-and-ready stretcher, upon which we laid Zillah, and began our journey to De Léon's coffee estate, at a higher elevation, as I said before, of the mountain-chain.

During our necessarily slow and toilsome march O'Sullivan whispered in my ear,

'Vernon, niver have oi sane (seen) features more loike those of an angel than there' (pointing, of course, to Zillah.) 'Ye'll bring all the meesteries of your craft to cure her, if ye can; oi feel that her loife will be as precious to me as to that disconsolate Don there—more so, indade.'

'How to you, Charley?'

'Did ye niver, in the coorse of your experiance, come upon a case of luv at furst sight? If not, oi'll tell ye a saycret—ye see one now?'

'Burke it, destroy it in the grain before it has time to germinate and grow. Putting aside other difficulties, there is the insurmountable one of creeds: you, one of Padre McCarthy's flock; she, probably a pet lamb of the synagogue, where the venerable Rabi Lopes officiates. Don Enrique—supposing even that Zillah recovers, which indeed is problematical—would never consent to such a co-mingle of tenets. I know these Jews well; the girl herself, likely enough, would be the strongest objector. However, there is lots of time, O'Sullivan, for thinking of such matters; just now it is a question of the unfortunate child pulling through by the skin of her teeth, as they say.'

We had now arrived at De Léon's plantation. How lovely and prosperous it looked! the coffee-bushes of its fields overburdened with the ripe scarlet berries of their crop; its pastures rich with the thick, tall, green Guinea grass; its cottages and huts nestled among fruit-trees and palms; its 'great house'—a generic term for every proprietor's dwelling on a Jamaica estate—large, pretentious, and embowered within gardens and shrubberies and orchards. And through all these indications of industry and wealth, and into that mansion of

luxury, we were bearing the semi-lifeless and mutilated body of its young and beautiful mistress.

Zillah in her chamber, and Sapper Jones's ready hand available in carpenter's craftwork, no difficulty was felt by me in getting surgical appliances shaped and made; so that before the swell surgeon put in an appearance, the fractures had been set and everything done. All was *secundum artem*, he was pleased, patronisingly, to say; the concussion of the brain was the injury entirely to be dreaded; a certain line of treatment was to be adopted; he left the case in my hands, but would return from time to time to watch it. Then with a small rouleau of doubloons in his pocket he returned to Kingston.

But why dwell too much upon this the professional part of my story? Suffice it to tell that early on the morning of the third day of the accident, to the unspeakable joy of her father and myself, my patient evinced a slight glimmer of returning consciousness; that after a while this became more perceptible and decided; and that, thanks to the admirable care she received at the hands of Miss Gloxinia McIvor, a lady of mature age and mixed Scotch and African blood, her nurse—there are no kinder or better ones in the world than the coloured women of the West Indies—complete intellectual restoration was the happy result. As for the broken bones, they were but a question of time; youth and a sound constitution would put those osseous structures all square.

I have said that the young Jewess was the fairest maiden I ever cast eyes upon; I must add that during an attendance which extended over many weeks I found her to be the most gentle, patient, amiable, simple, and pure-

mindful creature the Almighty ever put breath into. Her cheerfulness, her resignation to confinement and pain, her piety, after the manner of her faith, were lessons for any one to study, and her gratitude to her doctors for all their care and attention was worth more, much more, than the liberal gold of her over-elated parent. She spoke English perfectly, but with a foreign accent; she had picked it up during a lengthened residence in London.

Many a time had she begged me to tell her the story of her rescue, of which she recollected no more than the fact of her pony rolling over the precipice; and many a time did she, like Desdemona, 'seriously incline' to hear it. Her expressions of admiration for the gallantry and courage of her preserver were not much shown in words, but I could mark her eyes brighten, her face light up with pleasure, as I gave my oft-told tale. O'Sullivan, of course, had not been permitted to see the young lady while yet an invalid, but don't suppose that over and over again he had not visited the estate to inquire after her; indeed, his pony, like mine, must have been sick and tired of every inch of the road from Stony Hill to Buena Esperanza, and must have often wondered why they were always going there.

'O'll be roiding wid ye this morn, Vernon,' he used to say. 'Oi loike your company and your improving talkee-talkie; and while ye're wid Miss de Léon, o'll be taking a lesson in the unknown tongue from that brick of a governor of here.'

But, besides his 'roides' with me, there were many occasions when alone he would be seen to issue from the barrack-gates, and descend the well-known path to the savannah; and then his com-

rades, spying him, would call out, 'Hullo, Charley, off again to the land of Israel! Away to get a peep at the Rose of Sharon! How much longer to serve Laban for Rachel, eh, old chap?' All of which harmless brother officer 'chaff' passed by O'Sullivan like the idle wind, which he regarded not.

Of course the enamoured gentleman's visits of inquiry were no secret to Zillah de Léon; her father told her of them, ditto I myself, ditto Miss Gloxinia Melvor; the reports of the latter personage extended and embellished for the young lady's delectation as thus:

'Miss Zilly, my child, dat buccrah (white) sojer-officer, him come 'gain dis day; four, five, six time dis week him come. My fader, how him favour (likes) dis coffee 'state! I b'lieve him taking to coffee planter business; going be *book-keeper*' (the name of the junior superintendents upon a West Indian estate, upon the *lucus a non lucendo* principle).

'O no, Gloxinia,' says Zillah.

'Maybe him fond of ole massa self, and him habanner segar!'

'It is very possible, nurse; my father is the kindest and best of men, and his cigars are, I've heard him say, of Carvalho's best brands.'

'Maybe, missy, he larning Hebrew for synagogue?'

'Nonsense!'

'Plenty, I sure; den him lub dat lily piccaninny him pull out ob hole wid de broken arm, de broken collar-bone, and de obcussion ob de brains. Hi, my fader, what fine ting for do! jump off rock two hundred foot deep, and take girl he nebber see afore out ob big ribber. Sojer-officer too placky.'

'But, Gloxinia, Mr. O'Sullivan did not jump off the cliff; and I never was in the river, was I?'

'All de same, my child, near de ribber, in de ribber, all same.'

'And I don't know that Lieutenant O'Sullivan, though, like a gallant hero, he saved me from the grave, cares for me, much less—loves—me.'

'Hi, my patience! den for wharra (what) him come ebery day and all de day long a-boddering here?'

'I—don't—know—Gloxinia.'

'You don't sabe; but you can guess. My, how him hansom, dat buccrah!—red face, red hair, red whisker, red coat, all red together. Dey say him b'long in army to "*Gingerbeers*;" but what de "*Gingerbeers*" is I no know. See, missy, just dis minute I meet him in portico; he say,

"O, you're Miss de Léon's nurse, ain't you?"

"I 'as dat honour, sar," I gives reply.

"Den, nurse, dis bright new Mexican dollar is for you, and *dis* for your young lady. Gib it her wid my kind, my best compliment."

It was but a white rose-bud which Miss Gloxinia McIvor handed to Zillah; but had it been a jewel rich and rare, the young girl could not have prized it more. The colour on her pale emaciated cheek heightened to crimson; she gazed for a moment or two fondly at the flower, and then hid it within the folds of her dress.

But by and by came the day when Zillah was able to be moved from her room into an adjoining boudoir, and there to grant O'Sullivan entrance. As she reclined on a sofa, with the cool sea-breeze rustling her tresses and fanning her heated brow, as she lay there, her lips slightly parted, showing teeth of pearly whiteness, her delicate bosom panting and throbbing with excitement, every linea-

ment, conceal it as she might, lighted up with the expression of honest and heartfelt gladness that her preserver stood before her, the brush of great Millais himself could not have done her picture justice.

My story has pretty well shown that O'Sullivan was a man of some resolution and mettle, but when he stood before that delicate and tender-aged maiden no white-liver poltroon could have seemed more cowed and abashed.

Presently, however, he screwed his courage to the sticking-point and spoke. (Again I shall dispense with his brogue.)

'I am more happy, Miss de Léon, than, perhaps, you give me credit for to see you well, or nearly so; and to think that I have been chosen as one poor aid to such restoration is, indeed, unspeakable joy.'

She uttered not a word; her eyes filled with tears; but she held out her shapely hand to give him greeting.

He took and pressed it for a moment between his own.

'Mr. O'Sullivan,' said she, after a moment's pause, 'how can I find words to express my heart's overflowing thanks and gratitude for that which you undertook and achieved for me—*me* the daughter of a despised and hated race? To save the life of one unknown to you even by name you narrowly risked your own—dear, Dr. Vernon tells me, to a widowed mother in England. I am but a poor friendless motherless girl, a stranger, too, in a strange land; but O, had I died—as died I must but for your chivalrous daring and stalwart hand—the earth would have soon closed over the head of one very dear to me—my father. How can I, how can he, ever repay you?'

'Zillah!—pardon my presump-

tion, my untimely abruptness, but I must be honest and straightforward with you, cost what it may. From the moment when I took you in my arms and placed you in that litter until now, I have never ceased to think of you, to dream of you, to pray for you, and—ask Vernon—to speak of you. In the depths of that gorge where I first saw you, crushed, bleeding, death-like, there my heart went out to you; with you, Zillah, it will be always. O dearest! my life, my love, give me yours in return; that is the only guerdon I need, the only one I will accept.'

'I dare not, I must not,' said Zillah; 'but the same uprightness and honesty you have measured to me will I mete out to you, unconventional, unmaidenly, as it may seem. Listen! As in hours of sleeplessness, sickness, and agony I lay upon my bed, my thoughts have been always with, ever of, you; and, strange as it may seem, I have been taught to love you so fondly, without, until this moment, ever seeing your face.'

'O Zillah!'

'Stay! But as I lay and thought, and been taught, so I have known that, beyond the love to a dear and valued brother, mine for you could never extend; the sacred name of wife, the honoured one of husband, between us can never pass. We are of opposite faiths; with you Messiah is, with me He is to come; how could a union with two such contrary beliefs ever be blessed? Besides, my father would never consent to it; he is firm, bigoted, if you will, to his creed; and even yet more, ever since I was six years of age, he and my uncle De Castro arranged that I should marry my cousin Manuel. Take that which I may freely,

and without reservation, give you, the devoted affection of a sister. Let us part; never see me again, and Elohim bless and preserve you unendingly!'

'One question, Zillah; and, on the honour of a soldier, if the answer be against me, I will retire, and neither urge nor disturb you more.'

'Say on,' she whispered.

'As for our different faiths, I have known some loving ones get on well and happily together, tenets notwithstanding. Not to be frivolous, there is Jessica the Jewess and Lorenzo the Christian, whom Shakespeare tells us of; so let that hindrance pass. In regard, though, to this betrothed cousin of yours, has—he—had your love?—that's the question.'

'No; how should he? He is in Costa Rica, and I have not seen him for fourteen years—since, indeed, we were big boy and small girl together. Our intended marriage is one altogether of convenience—to keep the money in the family, they say.'

'Hurrah! Three cheers for Manuel de Castro! May he long remain in Costa Rica, and his shadow never grow less there! Zillah darling! Jewess or Moslem, Parsee or Gentoo, Charley O'Sullivan will have you for his bride. Adieu, *mia carissima*, *viva usted con Dios*, as your good old pater has taught me to say.'

And now my tale draws to its close. As O'Sullivan, all 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles,' came from Buena Esperanza into Stonyhill Barracks, I met him.

'Precious bad news, old fellow,' said I. 'I am ordered off to Falmouth on the other side of the island, and am going instant. Had you remained ten minutes longer studying the Talmud, I should not have seen you.'

We shook hands, and parted;

and such have been the vicissitudes of our military lives that we have never met since. But I know that Charley married the girl he saved and loved; for one day I read in the *Kingston Chronicle*:

'By special license of the Registrar-General, Charles O'Sullivan, R.E., to Zillah, only child of Don Enrique de Léon,' &c.

Whether the young lady was converted to Christianity; whether O'Sullivan became a prose-

lyte to Judaism; whether Don Enrique was induced to accede to the marriage, or whether the young people were wedded without it—for

'Love is a god,
Strong, free, unbounded, and, as some
define,
Fears nothing, pitieth none;'

or in what manner of way the disappointed Manuel received his *congé*, deponent sayeth not, for he knoweth not. H. L. C.

THE WISHING-WELL.

We sat beside the wishing-well
One bright September day:
She quaffed the wine with rosy lips,
Then handed me in play.

Deep drank I of that love-charmed draught
Which those sweet lips had stained;
That precious nectar every sip
To the last drop I drained.

Then thrice around the magic well
I walked, and wished amain;
But many have tried the same ere this,
And tried it all in vain.

ONLY THE SMOKE OF A CIGAR.

Ay de mi! We call ourselves free and independent beings, and yet the faintest scent or sound, or fleeting glance at places long unseen, has power to bear us on waves of memory, whether we would go or not. The cigar I am smoking this evening is one of a kind I have not smoked for years. Memories lie rolled in its fragrant leaf: its curling smoke wafts back my thoughts to the time when I was living in a far-off country; to days when I and my wife were young, and the children, who have now grown up and gone out into the world, were only 'the dearest little things' that ever we set eyes on. Our farm lay in a wild and lonely part of Natal. Fine grass-land undulated into the misty distance of the horizon, or was broken by the grand wall of the Cathlamba mountain range; at our feet ran the river, placid at times, at times tumultuous, as befits a river fed by sudden thunderstorms and excitable mountain streams. And 'like the river ran our life,' bright pictures float upwards in the air to-night, soft lights and shadows fill their canvas; then follow lurid gleams and blue-black storm-clouds.

There was one storm that, breaking over our family life and into its quiet days, made a great impression on my mind. I write of it after the lapse of many years. My wife had at the time a good trustworthy nurse, and this girl's father was desirous that she should leave service and come home, where a rich suitor awaited her. Between dislike for this individual and

love for our children, Annie was very reluctant to leave us; she lingered on from week to week, and put off her parent with various excuses. I sometimes wondered whether behind them all there was not a real heartfelt reason for remaining in service. I had seen Annie talking to some young fellow, one of my farm-labourers, in the moonlight, when the little ones were asleep, and it was possible that she preferred him to the moneyed man. Some women will *not* consider life prospects from a sensible point of view. My wife at last told Annie that she must leave us.

'You know that you are wanted at home,' she said, 'and I have suited myself with another nurse; and I think she is a good girl,' although my children do not take a fancy to her.'

'I'm going, ma'am, I know I must leave,' answered Annie; and a few days after this, without more words, she went.

Shall I ever forget that day? It was a perfect morning, meeting-time between spring and summer. The gray syringa blossom strewed the garden-path; the great wild roses that had lately been threading their milky way in the hedge, and hung wreathed among high branches where Nature's hand had flung them, all had faded, and the country was richer in colouring and less fairyland-like than it had been in the first bright advent of Spring crowned with her peach-blossom and feathery buds. We went out that morning into the garden to see Annie off, and wish her well.

She walked along the path under the shadow of the orange-trees, and out into the brilliant sunshine, turned at the gate for a last look at us, and then started into a fast run, having some miles to go before reaching home, and thinking nothing of the baking heat of the sun.

So passed away Annie the nurse from our sight.

The new nurse had a terrible time all that day long. Nothing could persuade the children that she had not supplanted Annie wilfully and maliciously. First they scolded the girl, then attacked her with fat little doubled-up fists, and finally 'sent her to Coventry,' and became deaf and dumb in all matters that concerned her. The mutiny was at its worst, and we were about to meet their naughtiness with strong home-rule measures, when there came a knock at the door. I opened it myself, not being given to much ceremony in those days, and found some boys waiting on the step.

'Sir,' said the biggest, 'we've come for Annie; father sent us.'

'For Annie! Why, she left this morning!'

'No, sir!' said the spokesman, with a startled look.

'But she did, indeed. Your sister left us this morning.'

'She never came home; we have come straight from there,' answered the boy; and, after saying this, he looked down and raised his eyes no more from the ground.

'Run back, boys, and see if she has not come by now; no doubt she looked in at her friend's on the way.'

At my words the party ran off, leaving me perplexed at Annie's conduct. I strolled down alone to a favourite haunt of mine, the garden by the river,

and overlooked the men at their task. Only one of them laboured on in silence. He was a little way from the others, digging up a piece of ground in preparation for seed-sowing. He started at my approach, and answered questions on garden matters very vaguely, and with a far-off unfathomable look in his dark eyes.

'You are making a crooked thing of that bed, Tom,' I said. 'Leave it alone, now, and I will come down early in the morning, and help you with it.'

'Very well, sir,' he replied, in the low constrained tone of a person anxious not to lose a word of some interesting conversation; and yet his comrades were merely joking together, and giving each other a word now and then.

'Do you hear thunder? Is rain coming?' I said, looking at his anxious face.

'No, there will come no rain for some days,' he answered low; and then he shouldered his spade, and went with the others to the tool-house.

The hilltops were rosy in the sunrise when I went down to the garden next morning, and a glorious freshness was in the air. Of the men, Tom was the only one down, and he was waiting for me, line in hand. How strange he looked, standing as quiet and still as the tree near him, yet with yesterday's strange attraction to some invisible thing strong upon him, and with yesterday's expression intensified in his face! It might have been taken as a study of the face of a Sibyl listening absorbed to the words of her oracle.

'Are you ill, Tom?' I inquired, looking closely at him.

'No, sir.'

'Then take the string over yonder, and look sharp about it. I want to ride over and see if Annie the nurse has turned up yet.'

He looked up at me with a strange wild glance, and then in silence obeyed. We were just finishing the work when he sprang from his knees, and called out in a loud voice,

'There! I knew it! They've found the body!'

Then indeed it was my turn to grow pale and look anxious in the ghastly light of a sudden suspicion that flashed across my brain.

'What,' I asked, 'in Heaven's name, do you mean?'

'Do you not hear the death-cry? They've found her! they've found her!'

It slowly, painfully was borne into my mind that I was in the presence of a murderer. I could not doubt it as I looked at Tom; but surely he was no common specimen. There he stood opposite me, not noticing me, careless of danger, and calling upon his victim by all the passionate love names that could rise to the lips of a broken-hearted man.

As I stood gazing on him in silence, the awful sound of the death-vail, faint and distant, fell on my ear, the sound that Tom's sense of hearing had received with such suspicious acuteness.

'Tom,' I faltered, 'foul work has been going on, and you have been concerned in it.'

'Ay, sir, I killed her,' he said aloud, and, as it seemed, defiantly.

'Great Heavens! And you can stand there and so heartlessly confess the crime!'

'There's naught more to do or say. *All's done*, sir. I killed her. This hand shed her blood. I—'

'Hush, Tom!' I exclaimed hurriedly; for the cheery voices of the other men could now be heard over the hill, and I feared Tom would commit himself before them. After all, he might be in-

nocent, and the cause of his wild words be grief. His manner was very strange. Had sorrow turned his brain, or was he really a criminal? He must be protected from himself until I knew more of the circumstances of the dreadful events, so I hastily sent him away from the garden.

'Take that basket up to my workroom, and wait there for me,' I said, raising my voice, and speaking as though displeased.

A quarter of an hour later I joined him, and shut the door on our two selves.

'Now, Tom, tell me what all this means, and try to control yourself and speak the truth,' I said.

He stood silent for a while, and then began his tale, and poured into my ears a tragedy of love, jealousy, and passion. Annie had given him reason, as he thought, to believe that she would marry him. He had imagined that she meant to run away from home and the rich suitor provided for her, and marry the man of her own choice.

'And so she did intend to do, as I believe; but not—not with me. Yet she was so kind and soft to me, sir, that I cannot tell. Even now, when her body lies deprived of life by this most cursed hand, I cannot answer the question, Did she love *me* or that other one? She had given me no promise—it hardly seemed that we needed that. To be with her was enough for me; I did not look on to the future.'

Tom paused, and for a moment his excited mind seemed to forget the horror of the present in a dream of remembered joy.

'Tom,' I said gently; and, with a start, he resumed:

'That day she quitted your service, I watched her leave with her little bundle on her head.

Singing through the fields she went, and I left my work and ran to join her by a path that would meet hers. I saw her cross the brook, but—not alone. A man had been before me, and had already met her; and the two sat down and stayed a long time on the bank by the brook.'

'Strange! and she seemed so anxious to reach home,' I muttered.

'Ay, strange, sir; and it seemed so to me. Mad jealousy filled my veins, each moment made me wilder. I flew down upon the two as if I were a tiger, not a man; and he, the coward, fled. And she, my Innocence, my love, rose to her feet and faced me.

We had words, and they only fired me more and more. How can I speak of it! Before I left that spot her life-blood dyed the waters of the stream.'

The next day Tom went to the magistrate, and gave himself up as Annie's murderer. He was committed to take his trial at the next assizes; but when the time came for the assizes the prisoner was far away. He died one evening as the sun went down—of love and a broken heart; but then (O shade of Rosalind!) this poor lover was not one of this tough and calm-hearted nation—for our Tom and his love, Annie the nurse, were Zulus.

K. G.
